





**NEWS IN BRIEF**

**Whitehall attacks Prescott 'travesty'**

MAGAZINE



# Bereaved father seeks 30mph limit for young drivers

BY RICHARD DUCS

A FATHER called for more stringent control of newlyqualified drivers yesterday after his teenage son and two friends were killed in a crash that tore their car in two.

Alexander Oxley, who passed his driving test nine months ago, Matthew Langton and Richard Hirst, all 17, died when the car Alexander was driving left the road and hit a tree. Karen Walkington, also 17 and the only passenger to survive Tuesday night's crash, was last night critically ill in hospital.

Alexander's father Peter Oxley said: "I feel very strongly about novice driving. If the Government had brought in legislation restricting new drivers to do no more than 50 or 60 kilometres an hour in the first year of driving, with only one [other] person allowed in the car, this might not have happened."

The three boys, from Bridlington, Humberside, died when Alexander's K-registration Rover Metro ran off the road on the A165 Scarborough to Bridlington road. The front end of the vehicle was thrown 40 yards by the force of the impact.

Witnesses spent more than half an hour cutting Karen free from the wreckage. Her legs were broken. Everyone in the car had been wearing a seat belt.

One in ten drivers is aged



Alexander Oxley: the car's 17-year-old driver

between 17 and 21, but they account for one in four of the annual 4,000 road deaths. Government alarm over such statistics has led to plans for a road safety education campaign which will be extended to schools and their potential new drivers.

John MacGregor, the Transport Secretary, plans to introduce a mandatory theory test for new drivers by 1996. The Government is still considering the introduction of "P" plates for probationary drivers' cars.

Mr Oxley, 51, whose son worked as his deputy manager at a family-run caravan park in Bridlington, said: "The fact that there were four of them in the car at once could have been a factor in the

accident. It must have affected the vehicle's handling. If we had the green plate rule, young drivers would have to abide to a 50kph speed limit and could only carry one passenger. This law exists on the Continent and I have wanted it brought into Britain for a long while."

"Alex obviously just lost it. Perhaps something ran across the road and he swerved to avoid it. He would never have been speeding or have damaged the car. He loved that car. It was his pride and joy and he had just been cleaning it before he went out. Unfortunately, there was a tree in the way and that was the end of the story."

"My heart goes out to the families of the other youngsters. They all had their lives in front of them. He was my only son and he was my best friend. I have lost both."

Mr Oxley added: "Legislation could have saved three lives. If it had saved just one person's life, it would have been worth it."

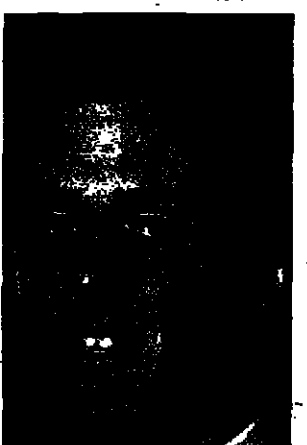
Paul Walkington, 42, the father of Karen, a trainee children's nurse, said: "They had just been out for a ride about to Scarborough. They often go over there with friends. It's a miracle that Karen wasn't killed."

Keith Hirst, 46, the father of Richard, a trainee car mechanic, said: "I suppose the nightlife must be better there. None of them were foolish or could be described as young tearaways. I know for a fact that Alex would never have anything else except a soft drink when he went out driving."

Matthew Langton's father David, 54, said he had bought his son a car as a present for getting nine O levels and he had been due to take his driving test in three weeks.

Inspector Chris Hillaby, of Humberside police, said there was no evidence that Alexander had been drinking before the crash at 11pm on Tuesday.

"There was a 60mph limit on this road. We have no reason to believe speed was involved but we have not ruled it out," he said.



Matthew Langton: had been due to take test



Richard Hirst: he was a trainee car mechanic

## Ref dodges van's late tackle

BY ROBIN YOUNG

FOOTBALL is getting much rougher. In Nottingham, police are searching for a defender who allegedly tried to flatten the referee with a demolition van, and at the Old Bailey yesterday a judge jailed a player who quit the field at half-time and returned with a machete and loaded gun.

Both incidents occurred in what would once have been peaceful Sunday morning matches. In Nottingham, police are looking for Terry Anderson, 28, a 6ft 5in demolition man and builder. He allegedly drove his van on to the pitch and at the referee, Wayne Kirkham, 28, who had just shown him the red card.

Mr Anderson was sent off for using abusive language and ungentlemanly conduct when his team, the Old Rose, of Radford, Nottingham, was losing 4-1 to Hucknall Chequers in a third division match

in the Nottinghamshire Combination League. Earlier Mr Kirkham had sent off two other Old Rose players.

In a match between Carrib and Bramah at Fyners Close playing fields in Dulwich, south London, in December last year, Owen Marriott, 31, of Carrib, became enraged after a Bramah player threatened to kill him.

He walked off at half-time, leaving Carrib to play with ten men, drove home and collected a 22 revolver and a machete. Marriott stationed himself outside the changing room but a spectator saw him and called the police.

Marriott, of Brixton, south London, admitted possessing a firearm and ammunition without a certificate and having an offensive weapon. Ignatius Fessal, for the defence, said there had been a running feud between Marriott and the player who threatened him.

Judge Richard Cole jailed Marriott, who was on licence from a six-year sentence for armed robbery in 1991, for three years, to commence from August next year when his licence would have expired.

In another case yesterday, a football hooligan was cleared of attacking a boy aged 13 after a match descended into chaos. David Betzell, 22, denied causing actual bodily harm to James Whittingham during the match between Theale Tigers and Forest Hill Dynamos.

Reading Crown Court was told that play had to be abandoned after spectators invaded the field and a punch-up ensued. Mr Betzell said he had only pushed James after a bad foul and ended up being punched and kicked as he lay on the ground.

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## US soldier beheaded wife's lover

AN AMERICAN army sergeant hacked off the head of his pregnant wife's lover and presented it to her in hospital, a US court martial in Germany was told yesterday.

Diane Schap, 26, told the court martial near Frankfurt that her husband, Stephen, carried the head of soldier Gregory Glover by his hair into her hospital bedroom.

The prosecution says Schap, believing his wife was pregnant by Glover, 21, from Phoenix, Arizona, had stabbed and decapitated him with an 8in knife. Schap, 26, from Baltimore, Maryland, admits the killing, but has pleaded not guilty to premeditated murder which carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

Mrs Schap, who was pregnant by Glover, said her husband told her after presenting her with the head that he planned the attack out of love for her.

Schap stabbed his victim between 10 and 15 times last December after chasing him out of a telephone booth at the US Army Sicksels airfield, near the town of Fulda, northeast of Frankfurt, as he was calling Mrs Schap.

## Pipes of the Clan Fraser mourn a son's passing

BY ALAN HAMILTON

THE Master of Lovat was buried yesterday in circumstances that no family should be asked to bear. Simon Fraser, 54, fell from his horse last Saturday and was dead of a heart attack within minutes.

In the graveyard of St Mary's church at Eskdale near Beauly, Inverness-shire, a Catholic enclave in the highlands of an avowedly Presbyterian Scotland, the flowers were still fresh from last week's service at which they buried his youngest brother Andrew, 41, gored by a buffalo while on safari in Tanzania.

Hundreds of mourners were present from the land-owning classes of which the Lovats are among the most prominent, to the employees and small tenant farmers whose livelihoods still depend on the fortunes of the great old estates.

But there was one glaring absence. Lord Lovat, 83, his father, patriarch and chief of the Clan Fraser, was too infirm to attend the funeral of either his eldest or his youngest son. There are fears for the health of their father, who almost 50 years ago led one of the first British commando units ashore on the Normandy beaches with swirling kilt and paper to add a dash to his bravery.

Lady Lovat, also in her eighties, had to be supported by her daughters outside the church as the pipes played "The Dark Island". A mountain of wreaths, to be added to those still there for Andrew, included tributes from Lord Forte, the hotelier, and Andrew and Camilla Parker-Bowles, friends of the Prince of Wales.

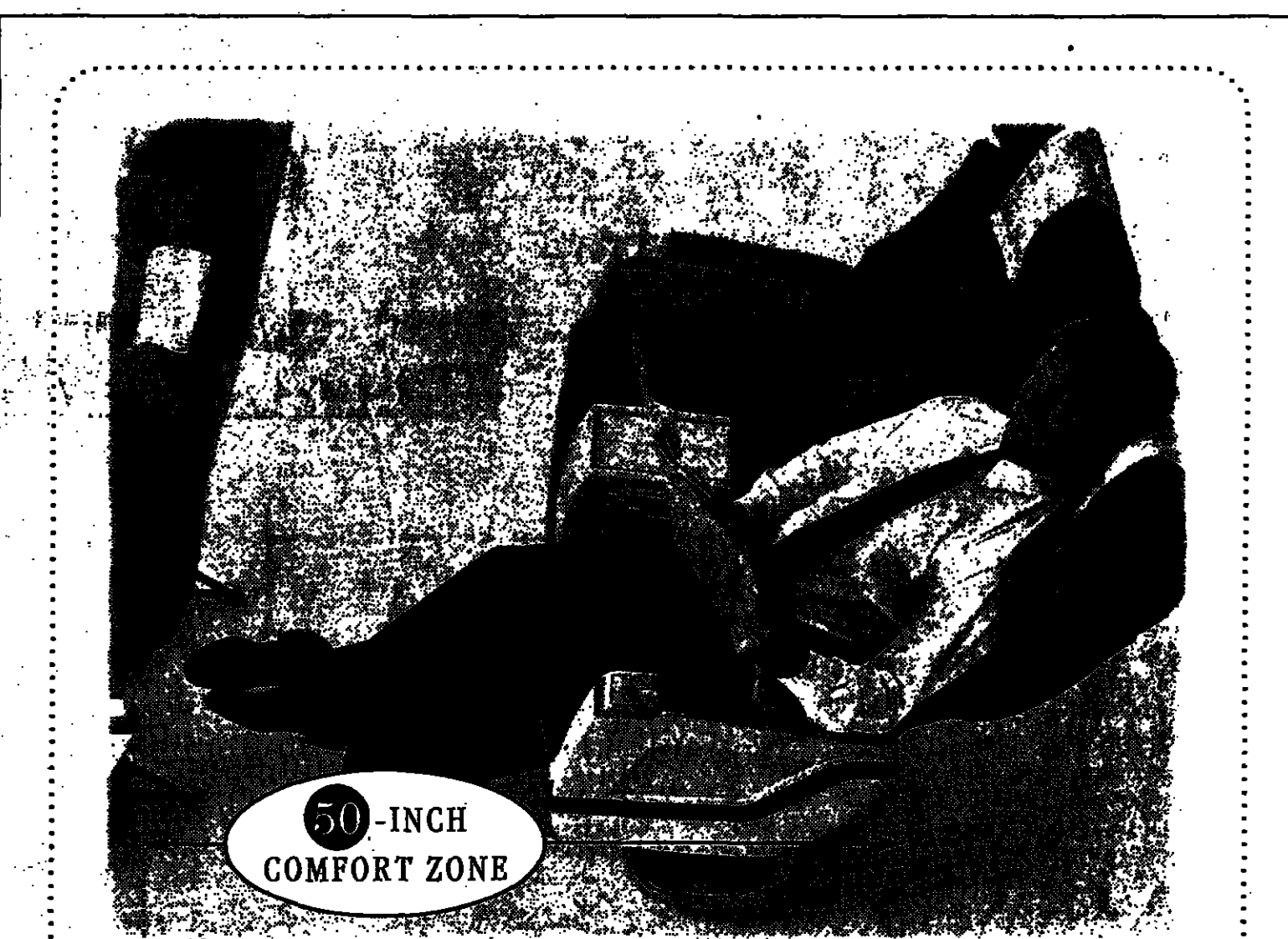
Leading a conclave of Scottish Catholic clergy at the funeral service, the Rt Rev Mario Conti, Bishop of Aberdeen, told the congregation: "The whole community is united in sorrow at his untimely passing. We particularly remember Lord and Lady Lovat who, in the course of a few days, have lost their youngest and eldest sons in tragic circumstances."

Henry Keswick, Mr Fraser's brother-in-law, told the packed church that the new chief of the Clan Fraser had been a great sportsman, enthusiastic businessman and marvellous companion. "He was an accomplished horseman and would not have minded literally meeting his end in the saddle."

Simon Fraser's coffin was carried to the graveside by six members of the Fraser clan, including his eldest son, also Simon, aged 17, a pupil at Harrow school, who inherits the title Master of Lovat and who, on his twenty-first birthday, will find himself one of the half-dozen largest landowners in Scotland.



Lady Lovat, second from right, supported by her family at the funeral



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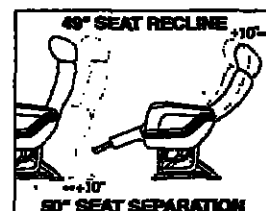
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## SATURDAY IN THE TIMES



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JUMBO PRIZE CROSSWORD IN WEEKEND

MATTHEW PARRIS, COLUMNIST OF THE YEAR, ON EATING OUT AND FRANCES BISSELL, THE TIMES COOK, ON DINING IN THE

MAGAZINE

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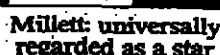


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**BY FRANCES GIBB**  
**LEGAL CORRESPONDENT**

At the other end of the spectrum, Mr Justice Harman — known for his "off the cuff" bench comments — is most criticised "because of the inco-

Both Mr Justice Millett and Mr Justice Otton — widely regarded as among the very best judges — are also among those most often appealed, it finds. Yet Mr Justice Otton

Mr Justice Cresswell, of all judges named, alone chose to respond. He said he did not accept the "alleged criticisms" and pointed out they conflict with favourable comments made in the last survey. He also said

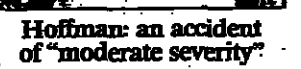
**The survey found strong criticism of widespread use of deputy judges. The quality of the decisions made by deputies (senior QCs or circuit judges) does not always match that of High Court judges, lawyers say. Only 36 per cent of appeals against decisions made by High Court**

Of the total applications, 43 were from women (8 per cent) and 11 from ethnic minorities (2 per cent).



**BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR**

**Hoffman: an accident of "moderate severity"**



"This is a milestone in research into ME. It demonstrates the organic basis of ME and lays to rest once and for all the myth that ME is a psychological illness."

BY ROBERT CRAMPTON

who sleep rough, and live pretty roughly too, are not often given to kind words for the forces of law and order. Walking west from Fleet Street at 7pm, we find the

into glue and all that, they're trying to get money for crack. Here it's quiet, you can get down." Members of the homeless unit have tried to coax him into a hostel but he

under a blanket between the Halifax and Pizza Hut, bear this out. Brian is 19. He left Greenock aged 14 because his father beat him up. He is in the Strand because "it's in the

the other two dozen or so young people there, lying pretty much everywhere except the Alliance and Leicester Building Society, want it too.

**BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT**

Mr Dear, who testified during an industrial tribunal to

Rex Makin, Miss Halford's solicitor, said last night that the report vindicated many of her complaints against the Merseyside force. Miss Hal-

He expressed disquiet about the speed of response; an unacceptable level of officers deployed to the incident without adequate training; and the inadequacy of equipment to protect officers in what he saw

A spokesman for Merseyside police said that no comment would be made until next month when the report was presented to the local police authority.

**A British Rail driver was**

It also blamed Alan Peel, area train crew manager at Birmingham New Street, for failing to establish whether Mr Sutton was fit to go on duty.

## SELECTIONS FROM OUR RANGE

**E29**

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**BY ALEXANDRA FREAN, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT**

former chairman of the Bar, who argued that no judge would jail a woman like her just before Christmas.

Ambridge One, said: "The last person I tried to get out of prison was Nelson Mandela: that took rather longer."

## LAST FEW DAYS

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## Phone swindle

**Paulo Baron, 24, of Oxshott, Surrey, who made £44,000 of calls to his girl friend in Brazil using an illegal gadget in phone boxes, was sentenced to 180 hours' community service at Guildford Crown Court.**

## Stab remand

James Brammer, 18, of no fixed address, was remanded in police custody until April 6 accused of the attempted murder of a police officer in the Strand, London, on Monday.

## Hounds foxed

A pack of foxhounds had to be winched to safety after being left stranded for a night on a mountain ledge near Patterdale, Cumbria, while chasing a fox.

## Tiny fortune

A seven-inch stuffed and cased gudgeon dating from 1936 was bought for £5,000 at Bonham's, London.

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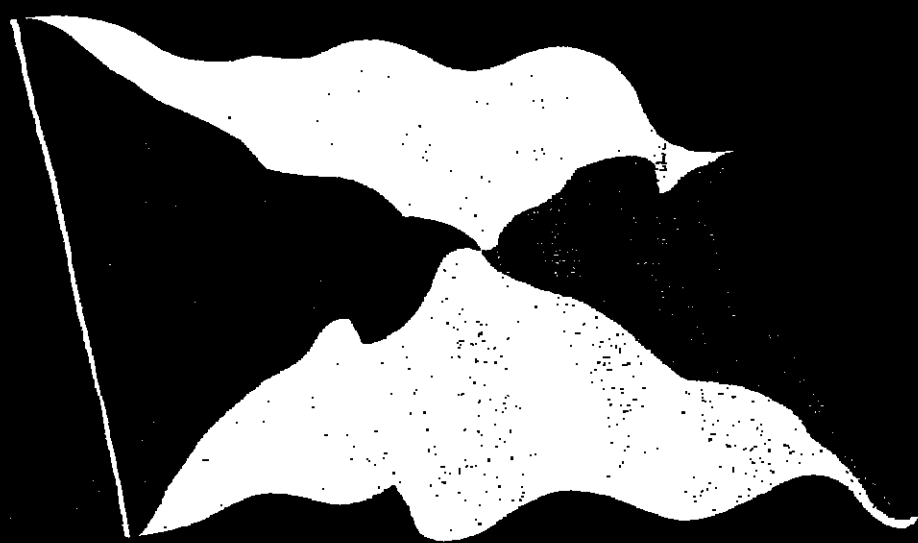
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## MacGregor cuts 49 road plans to save cash and country

By TIM JONES AND NICK NUTTALL

THE Government scrapped 49 projects in its £23 billion road-building programme yesterday and warned motorists that they would have to foot more of the cost.

John MacGregor, the Transport Secretary, claimed the review would speed the most important improvements, minimising blight and damage and disruption to communities and the environment.

But last night he appeared to have angered both the anti- and the pro-roads lobbies. His review was also attacked by the Opposition parties, who demanded a White Paper on transport.

Tory backbenchers with constituencies near the M25 were dismayed that plans to widen the motorway to 14 lanes had not been dropped. Peter Ainsworth, MP for Surrey East, said: "We cannot go on building roads to meet unlimited demand."

The 49 schemes that have been abandoned were no longer considered to be environmentally acceptable or were not thought likely to be started

in the foreseeable future. For example, upgrading of the A31 through the New Forest has been dropped because of the likely effect of a nationally important and environmentally sensitive area.

Mr MacGregor said: "It is no part of the Government's policies to tell people when and how to travel. On the other hand, we must be aware of the consequences if people continue to exercise their choices as they do at present."

"There is no realistic possibility of simply halting traffic growth. What we can seek is to bring home its full cost."

He said that increases in fuel duty and motorway tolls would help people to make more informed decisions about using their cars.

The revised road-building programme gives priority to 80 schemes, with a slightly longer timetable for a further 173 projects. Work will be suspended on another 69 schemes, which are unlikely to be started.

Highest priority has been given to motorways, such as the southern section of the M1 and the M6 from Birmingham to Manchester, and to roads where gridlock conditions have been forecast.

However, proposals for new motorways — the M12 in Essex, and to the south and west of Preston, Lancashire — have been withdrawn as part of the policy of using existing road corridors to minimise building on open countryside.

Schemes that would have encouraged more commuting into towns and cities, such as the A580 Liverpool to Manchester corridor, have also been dropped.

Conservationists said the review left intact much of the roads plan and its environmental destruction, and of-

fered no new policies to encourage public transport.

Stephen Joseph, director of Transport 2000, described the review as "a can which will still cause a lot of destruction" to homes and the countryside.

Haulage groups said that scrapping 49 schemes without inducements for public transport would create a more congested network that would make industry less competitive in Europe.

John Gutteridge, of the Freight Transport Association, said: "The 1989 roads programme was identified as the minimum requirement for up to the year 2000 and nothing has happened to reduce the need. Now we have lost a third of it."

Mr MacGregor also introduced a citizen's charter for motorists, to ensure that at least 93 per cent of lane miles will be free of roadworks on motorway and trunk roads.

Leading article, page 19

## Teacher's lifetime of dedication honoured

By BEN PRESTON  
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

A CROFTER'S daughter who has taught two generations of children in one of Britain's smallest schools was yesterday named Teacher of the Year.

Mary Cameron, 58, expected to stay for only a couple of days when she stood in for a sick teacher 35 years ago at Kilchoan primary school on the remote Ardnarmurchan peninsula.

But she never left. As headmistress and sole full-time teacher at the nine-pupil school, she has become a mainstay of the close-knit Gaelic-speaking community.

Miss Cameron, on her first trip to London, said: "I have not missed a single day in 35 years. I enjoy every moment. It won't be long before I hear a pupil saying, 'You taught my granny.'"

She is a native Gaelic-speaker and tries to keep the language alive, using traditional songs to teach her pupils about their heritage.



Mary Cameron with her crystal trophy. She also received £5,000 to be spent on her school, which has nine pupils.

Most become boarders in Fort William at the age of 12 because there are no secondary schools near by.

Miss Cameron plans to retire to an eight-acre croft at

Acharacle, Highland, which she farms with her mother.

Morgan MacDonald, a former pupil who nominated Miss Cameron for the award, said she had shown never-

ending patience when teaching her three children. "Mary has made teaching her life. I cannot imagine a better start to any child's life," she said.

Miss Cameron was present-

ed with a cheque for £5,000 for her school and a crystal apple trophy at a ceremony sponsored by Woman magazine and Encyclopaedia Britannica.



MacGregor: M25 plans angered Tory MPs

### WITHDRAWN SCHEMES

THE schemes withdrawn from the Government's M12-M25 in Chelmsford, Essex; M606-A6177 Staygate improvement, Bradford; A1-M1 Scratchwood link, Barnet, north London; A1 Tempersford scheme, Bedfordshire; A5 Towcester bypass, Northampton; A6 Loughborough bypass, Leicestershire; A6/A46 Leicester Eastern bypass; A6 Kibworth-Market Harborough improvement, Leicestershire; A12 Sackmuncham bypass dualing, Suffolk; A16 East Keal bypass, Lincolnshire.

A31 Malwood Hill-Ringwood improvement, Hampshire; A36 West Wellow bypass, Hampshire; A38-A5148 junction improvement, Staffordshire; A40 Headington bypass, Oxfordshire; A40 north Oxford bypass; A40 Longford-M50 (Gorsley) improvement, Gloucestershire; A41 Christleton and Waverton bypass, Cheshire; A43-A16 Stamford relief road, Lincolnshire; A45 Broad Lane-Tile Hill Lane junction improvement, Coventry; A45 Leamington Road junction improvement, Coventry; A45 Sir Henry Parkes Road-Kenilworth Road junction improvement, Coventry.

A47 Skelington Bands improvement, Leicestershire; A49 Dorington bypass, Shropshire; A49 Ashton bypass, Hereford and Worcester; A51 Burford and The Green improve-

ment, Cheshire; A54 Kelsall bypass to A556, Cheshire; A55-A582 junction improvement, Lancashire; A59 East and West Marton bypass, North Yorkshire; A63 west of A1 improvement, Leeds.

A167 Durham western bypass; A167 Cook of the North, Ayckley, improvement, Durham; A339 Basingstoke-Headley bypass improvement, Hampshire; A339 Headley bypass, Hampshire; A339 Headley bypass Newbury improvement, Hampshire; Berkshire; A406 Ironbridge-Neasden improvement, Brent, northwest London; A428 Lavendon bypass, Buckinghamshire; A428 Turvey bypass, Bedfordshire; A522 Leek bypass-Rushington Spencer improvement, Staffordshire; A556-M6-A559 improvement, Cheshire; A556 Delamere-Oakmere/Norley Lane A49, Cheshire; A580 corridor improvement, Liverpool-Manchester, Knowsley, St Helens, Wigan, Sefton.

A585 Norcross-M55 link, Lancashire; A1079 Bishop Burton bypass, Humberside; A1237 York northern bypass improvement, North Yorkshire; A6120 Leeds outer ring road; A6120 Seacroft-Crossgates bypass, Leeds; A6120 Preston southern and western bypass, Lancashire; east-west route A1-Stansfeld, Hertfordshire and Essex; east-west route A5-A1, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire.

## Epileptics 'suffering from GP ignorance'

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

UP TO 50,000 people are suffering from epileptic seizures which could be prevented if family doctors prescribed modern drug treatments, specialists said yesterday.

Ignorance of the condition, which affects 350,000 Britons, is widespread among GPs, who ignore sufferers or refer them to hospital. Nearly 100,000 people suffer seizures at least once a month but half could be eliminated with the right treatment, Dr Tim Betts, consultant neuropsychiatrist

at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, said.

Launching a survey of public attitudes to epilepsy, Dr Betts said sufferers were still stigmatised as unstable. One in four of the 1,000 respondents said they would not feel comfortable about letting their child play with a child who had epilepsy.

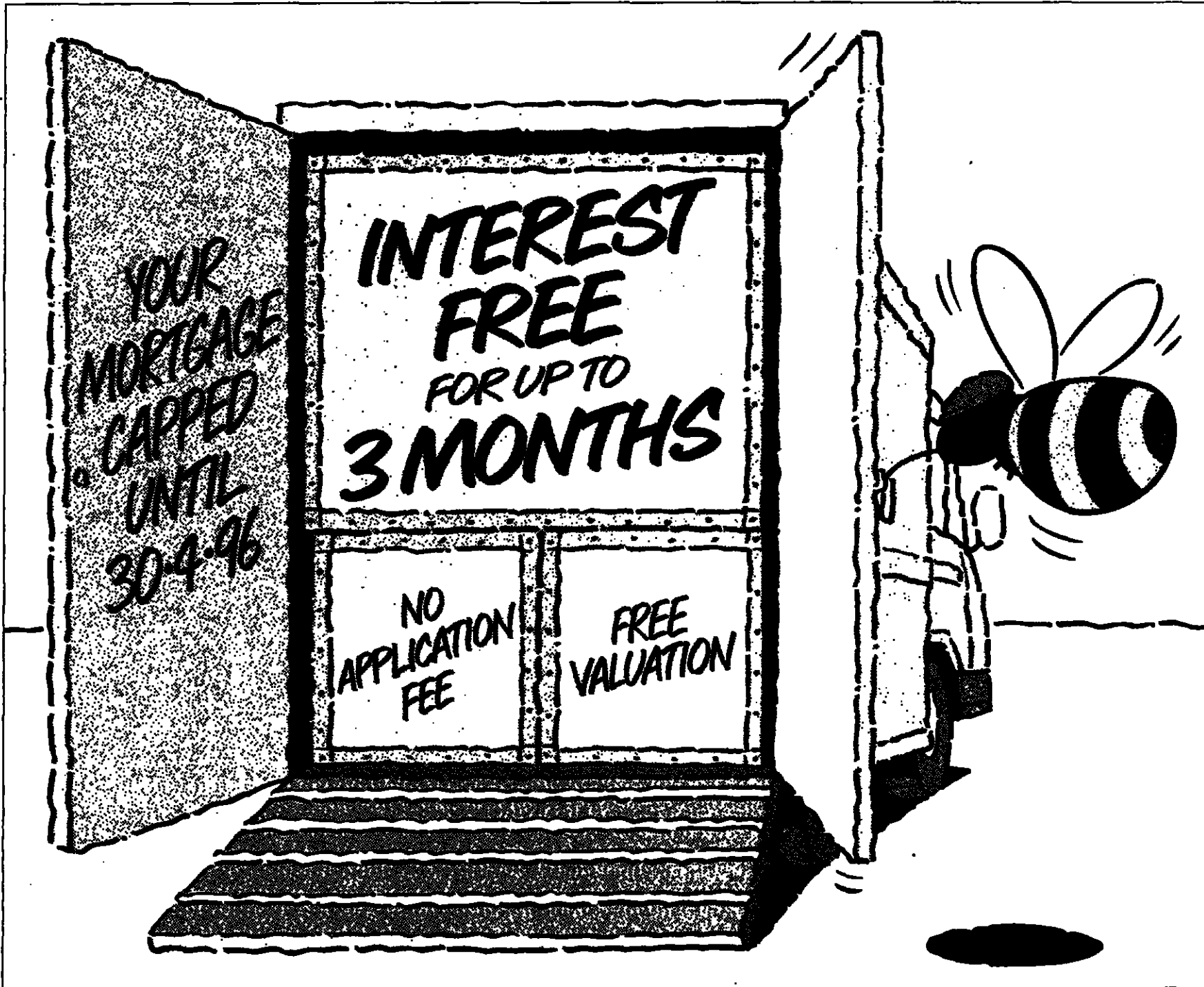
Seizures can affect a sufferer's job prospects, relationships and quality of life. In 80 per cent of sufferers the condition is fully controlled with drugs or surgery but they are still barred from jobs in the police or armed services and may have difficulty following other careers such as primary school teaching.

One in 200 of those who continue to have seizures die each year in accidents, by suicide or directly as a result of their condition. Suicide is five times more common among epilepsy sufferers.

"Whole areas of the country have no epilepsy service at all," Dr Stephen Brown, chairman of the Epilepsy Task Force, said.

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# Travel chaos ahead as record numbers join Easter exodus

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

A RECORD 1.5 million Britons will join the Easter exodus this weekend. Airports report huge increases in passengers compared with last year, and ferry companies say thousands of people will be crossing the Channel.

Heathrow expects to handle 610,000 passengers over the four-day break, a rise of 7 per cent. Gatwick 300,000, Manchester 150,000 and Glasgow 68,000. About 375,000 are jetting off on a package holiday. Spain is this Easter's top destination, with high numbers heading for Majorca, Minorca, Ibiza, the Canaries and Benidorm. Airports warned passengers not to wrap Easter eggs and presents as they had to be opened for security and Customs checks.

The London Weather Centre said the Easter break would be wet and windy, with gales across the country and in the Irish Sea and English Channel. Temperatures will range from 8-11C, with snow

on the northern hills. A spokesman said: "People should wrap up because the weather will be unsettled and the wind will be very cold. It is not really a weekend for outdoor pursuits."

Travellers could face long delays getting to their departure airports, according to the Automobile Association, which has warned of "miles of misery" from roadworks. Potential blackspots are at the M4 near London (between junctions 2-3, and near 4); A4 in West Kensington; M25 in Surrey (junctions 10-11 and 7-8); M6 near Birmingham (junctions 5-6); M1 in Leicestershire (junctions 21-22); A11 in Cambridgeshire (junction 9); M4 in West Glamorgan (junctions 41-42); M6 in Cheshire (junctions 21-21A) and the A57M in Manchester.

A spokesman said: "There will be heavy traffic on routes to airports, Channel ports and leisure parks." Most theme parks reopen in the next

fortnight. National Express, which says Maundy Thursday is its busiest day of the year, has laid on more than 100 extra coaches. British Rail is not expecting any problems.

F&O said a record 200,000 holidaymakers, up 40 per cent on last year, would use the Dover-Calais route. Another 100,000 are travelling with Stena Sealink to the Continent or to Ireland. The AA said bookings for its Overminter continental breaks were up 40 per cent.

Big crowds are expected at the Blackburn Rovers v Manchester United football match on Saturday. There are eight race meetings on Saturday, including Kempton and Haydock, and 16 on Monday. In Leicestershire, the Auto Cycle Union Supercup at Donington Park will cause delays on the A453 on Sunday and Monday.

Travel, pages 22-23  
Forecast, page 24



Petrol pumps at Dover port await holiday makers filling up for the Continent

## Ferry port pumps up price of petrol

By KEVIN EASON, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

MOTORISTS pouring into Dover at the start of the Easter holiday were warned yesterday to steer clear of the highest petrol prices in England.

Drivers filling up for the Continent at Britain's biggest ferry port could be paying up to 14p a gallon more than the national average.

The AA said yesterday: "The petrol companies have a captive market and there is nothing the motorist can do but pay up and wince."

A survey this month of 34 major towns and cities by PFIH Vehicle Management Services, which checked more than 122,000 credit card receipts, showed that Dover was the most expensive for all types of petrol.

While the national average for four star petrol was 251.39p a gallon (55.3p a litre), it was 262.66p (57.78p) in Dover. Unleaded was 10.86p more expensive than the national average at 238.25p (52.41p), while the gap for super-unleaded was even wider at 14.63p, with motorists paying 253.34p (55.73p) in Dover.

Only one town, Northampton, was more expensive for diesel, but garages in Dover

were still charging an average 237.07p a gallon (52.15p a litre), 7.41p a gallon higher than the national average. It was also 24.65p a gallon more than diesel car owners and lorry drivers would have been charged in France.

Motoring organisations admitted that their usual advice to shop around for petrol was probably useless. The AA said: "The lowest prices are probably available in garages and hypermarkets in Dover, but which holiday makers would know where they were?"

BP and Shell, Britain's biggest petrol companies, denied their prices were too high. Shell said its Dover Priority filling station was selling unleaded petrol at 222p a gallon (48.9p a litre) this weekend. BP's average unleaded price was 235.9p (51.9p) — almost 3p below PFIH's survey price for Dover, but 8.7p more than the national average.

Dover handles 70 per cent of the two million vehicles which set out on continental holidays each year. Easter weekend is the start of the exodus, and ferry companies and holiday firms report healthy bookings.

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"Through the NVQ initiative we have discovered talents and competencies we would never otherwise have known about," says Ian McDermott of Philips Components in Blackburn.

Despite being one of the most successful companies in their field, Philips felt increased competition and technology advances would mean having to look again at their staff's capabilities and training programme.

With the introduction of National Vocational Qualifications, they can now assess individual employees to a nationally recognised standard developed by employers and backed by Government.

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Ian McDermott points out that the training time using new techniques have halved. He adds, "It has helped us identify training needs. It has aided recruitment. Morale and motivation have improved. The company is seen as a good place to work."

If you want to take the guess work out of training, NVQs (or SVQs in Scotland) may be the way to go. For further information please telephone the number below.



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## British beef offers a holiday bargain

By RUTH THOMAS

BRITISH beef is recommended if planning a roast as substantial savings can be made at the supermarkets. New season British lamb is still in short supply so prices remain high.

Strong demand for quality fish for Good Friday has pushed up prices despite a plentiful supply. Large halibut steaks cost as much as £8 a lb although prime brill and turbot are available for around £4 a lb and small John Dory from £2.20 a lb.

One of the best fruit buys this week are Spania strawberries at 59-80p per 8oz punnet. The Fruit and Vegetable Information Bureau recommends a little black pepper to bring out the full flavour of the strawberries.

Good growing conditions have produced a succulent crop of purple sprouting broccoli, available at 69-99p a lb.

Advertised best buys: Asda: fresh standard turkey, 88p a lb; fresh beef topside, £1.99 a lb; strawberries, 79p for 8oz; lamb samosas, 99p for 4 (180g); cauliflower, 49p each; cheese, egg and bacon flan 95p a lb.

Budget: parsnips, 27p a lb; large Danish gammon joint, £1.69 a lb; Skol lager, £5.59 for 12 500ml cans; Cathedral City mature cheddar, £2.49 a lb; honeydew melon, 99p each; fresh cod cutlets, £2.49 a lb.

Co-op: Pork Farm pork pie, £1.59 a lb; McCain Chippy chips, 49p for 2lb; British pork spare rib chops, £1.19 a lb; diet cottage cheese, 69p for 8oz.

frozen Brussels sprouts, 45p a lb.

Gateway: tomatoes, 39p a lb; spring onions, 48p a bunch; loose new potatoes, 19p a lb; British boneless leg of pork, £1.09 a lb; cheese and tomato pizza, 99p for 360g; Vitbe Hi-Bran bread, 59p for 800g.

Iceland: chocolate bunny, 99p for 140g; Mars fun size egg, £1.39; hot cross buns, 59p for 6; Mother Hubbard Easter egg cakes, 99p for 10; fresh gammon joints, £3.99 for 1.2kg; St Ivel low fat yoghurts, 99p for 8.

Safeway: British cooked ham, 49p a lb; white hot cross buns, 59p for 6; frozen strawberry/Blackforest gateau, £2.99 for 14 portions; smoked Scottish salmon, £4.49 for 200g; Brie, £1.79 a lb; frozen prawns, £2.99 for 450g.

Sainsbury's: double cream, 59p for 10 fl oz; Golden Delicious apples, 29p a lb; pink grapefruit, 28p each; coleslaw, 69p for 500g; broccoli 49p a lb; frozen blackcurrant cheesecake, 99p for 450g.

Tesco: Tenderlean New Zealand leg of lamb, £2.49 a lb; courgettes, 49p a lb; loose unsalted middle back bacon, £1.29 a lb; family size light fruit slab cake, £1.49; white seedless grapes, 89p a lb; Nescafé Gold Blend instant coffee, £4.97 for 300g.

Waitrose: Scotch roasting beef, £2.89 a lb; pork chipolatas, 69p for pack of 8; organic parsley, 49p for 25g; asparagus, £1.99 for 250g; stem ginger cake, £1.19; cornflakes, 79p for 500g.

## KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE  
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

### Oslo challenge

After three games of his match against the top Norwegian grandmaster Simen Agdestein in Oslo, Michael Adams of England leads by the score of 2-1. In the following game, Adams triumphs after a series of mind-bending complications.

White: Michael Adams  
Black: Simen Agdestein  
Oslo Challenge 1994

### Alekhine's Defence

- 1 e4 Nf6
- 2 Nc3 c5
- 3 e5 Ne4
- 4 Qf3 Nc3
- 5 dxc3 c6
- 6 Bf4 Bf5
- 7 O-O-O e6
- 8 Qg3 h6
- 9 Nf4 Qa5
- 10 Kb1 b5
- 11 Nf3 c5
- 12 h5 Ne6
- 13 Nh4 Bh7
- 14 Qd4 b4
- 15 Bg2 Rb8
- 16 Ng6 Rb8
- 17 Rf3 Be7
- 18 Bxc4 dxc4
- 19 Qxc4 Qc5
- 20 Qxc5 Nc5
- 21 Nf6 Ne4
- 22 Be1 bxc3
- 23 b3 Bb4
- 24 Rf3 Nd2+
- 25 Bxc2 Rf8
- 26 Nd7 Rf2
- 27 Rf1 Bc3
- 28 Nd6+ Kd7
- 29 Rxc3 Bxc1
- 30 Kc1 Rf2
- 31 g4 Rg2
- 32 Rb4 Rf2
- 33 Rc5 Rg2

34 Nb5 Rg4

35 Rc7+ Kd6

36 Rxa7 Rg5

37 Ne4 Kd5

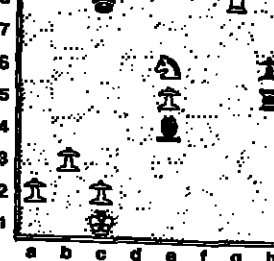
38 Nxe6 Rb5

39 Rg7 Be4

40 Rg4+ Black resigns

Whether Black plays 40... Kd7 or 40... Kd7 41 Nc5+ forks king and bishop.

### Diagram of final position



### Monaco tournament

With three rounds completed in the rapidplay/blindfold tournament in Monaco, Ivanchuk has fallen back after losing to Karpov while Anand has advanced by a double victory against Seirawan, as has Kramnik with two wins against Zsuzsa Polgar.

Scores are: Anand (India), Kramnik (Russia) 6 points from 8 possible; Ivanchuk (Ukraine) 5.5; Ljubojevic (former Yugoslavia) 4.5; Kamsky (USA), Karpov (Russia) 4; Korchnoi (Switzerland) 3.5; Piket (Holland), Judit Polgar (Hungary), Zsuzsa Polgar (Hungary), Seirawan (USA) 3; Nunn (England) 2.5.

Winning Move, page 48



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APRIL PREMIERE



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WEEKDAYS 8PM



GLADRAGS & GLAMOUR.  
WEEKDAYS 8.45PM



WILDSIDE  
SUNDAYS 8PM



SYKES  
WEEKDAYS 5.55PM



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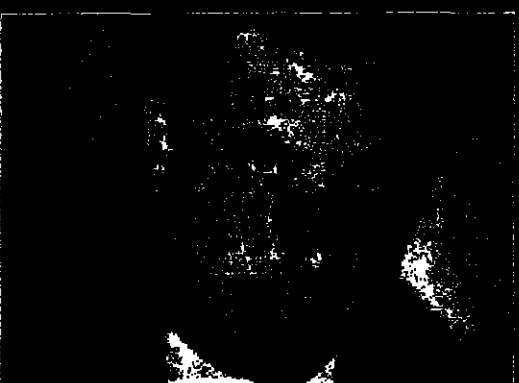
BEVERLY HILLS 90210.  
SUNDAYS 7PM



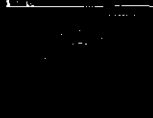
BARNEY AND FRIENDS  
WEEKDAYS 2PM



THE BODYGUARD.  
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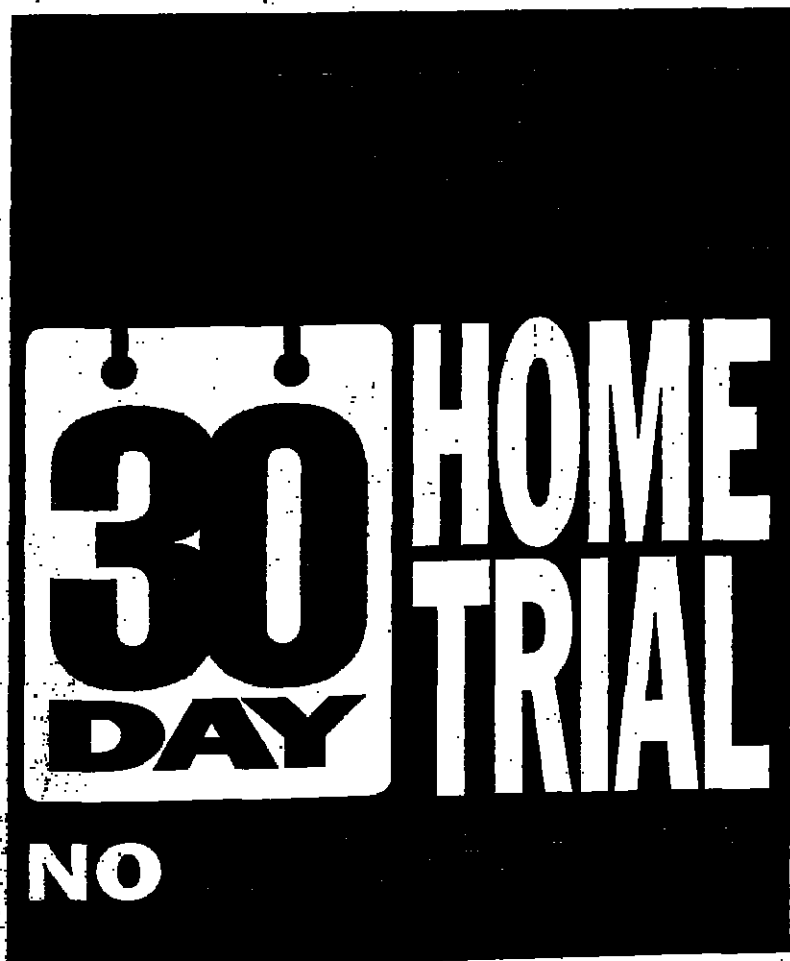


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# Whitehall holds its breath as Scott winds up hearing

By MICHAEL DYNES, WHITEHALL CORRESPONDENT

LORD Justice Scott's Herculean enquiry into the arms-to-Iraq affair entered its closing phase yesterday after almost a year of high-profile public hearings which have left Whitehall traumatised.

The enquiry has received written evidence from 166 witnesses, held 400 hours of public hearings, sat in closed session for 50 hours and gathered 200,000 pages of documents.

For most of the 55 ministers and officials called to give evidence during the 81 days of hearings, the experience was not a pleasant one. Few had been subjected to such a prolonged period of cross-examination, which stripped bare Whitehall's procedures and practices.

If the experience of those who had to face Lord Justice Scott was unprecedented, so were the circumstances that led to the enquiry. It was set up on November 10, 1992 after the collapse of the Matrix Churchill trial at the Old Bailey, in which three businessmen had been accused of illegally exporting defence equipment to Iraq.

The failure of the prosecution caused a sensation. Ministers and officials were accused of conspiring to breach their own arms export guidelines and of using public interest immunity certificates (PIIs) to prevent disclosure of confidential documents vital

to the defence case that the businessmen had acted with the knowledge and approval of government.

The public outcry was such that John Major felt he had no option but to grant an independent member of the judiciary access to ministers, officials, members of the security and intelligence services, and all relevant documents. It was a decision that many in

one of the sources of this intelligence was Paul Henderson, the former managing director of Matrix Churchill, who had been spying on Iraq for MI6.

Due to a combination of incompetence, poor communication, a desire to protect the source of the intelligence on Iraq's procurement activities, and genuine oversight, this intelligence appears not to

pressing the Government to relax its export restrictions. During a meeting in December 1988 between William Waldegrave, the former Foreign Office minister, and two former trade and defence ministers, Alan Clark and Lord Trevelyan, an agreement was reached to relax the 1985 Howe guidelines, which had prohibited the sale of all lethal equipment and that which could "enhance or exacerbate the conflict".

Lord Justice Scott must decide whether this "relaxation" of the guidelines, which was never announced to Parliament, amounted to a change of policy or merely a "more liberal interpretation" of existing policy. Comments made by the judge over the past few days suggest that he has yet to make up his mind.

He must also pass judgment on whether the case should ever have been brought to trial, and on the Government's use of PII certificates, known as "gagging orders", to prevent vital documents from being made available to the defence.

Apart from some extra hearings in May, Lord Justice Scott is now free to write his report. The disclosure that it is unlikely to be published until November or December will give Mr Major a much-needed breathing space.

Diary, page 18



Lord Justice Scott, who arrived at the enquiry by bicycle on most days, will now compile his report

## Party rules give Major an edge in leadership fight

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

OPINION hardened yesterday that John Major has a serious fight on his hands to remain in Downing Street until the end of the year.

But, as they surveyed the wreckage of the latest ill-fated attempt to hold the Conservative Party together over Europe, MPs had no clearcut idea how or when his removal might take place.

The Prime Minister's strongest card in the darkest days since his election in November 1990, is that there is no short-term mechanism for ousting him. The annual, usually uncontested, re-election of the Conservative Leader takes place in the late autumn.

In the past few days the sound of whinnying stallions could be heard all over Westminster. If the means were available today there seems little doubt that a contest would take place, even though the rules have been tightened since the downfall of Margaret Thatcher and now require a tenth of the parliamentary party, or 34 MPs, to write in confidence to the chairman of the 1922 Committee calling for an election.

The disaffection today is so great that it would be relatively easy to find the requisite number of malcontents. An animal of the Tony Marlow or Teresa Gorman class would of course have no chance of winning, but a substantial wave of abstentions could mean curtains for Mr Major, and a heavyweight contest would be set in train.

In the view of most Conservative MPs Mr Major will be in greatest peril in the days after the European election results on Sunday, June 12. If the Conservatives are routed, the argument goes, Mr Major

will be under irresistible pressure to step down.

The Cabinet, as with Baroness Thatcher, will take the view that he should go and tell him as gently as they can. Or the party grandees, the leaders of the 1922 executive committee, will do what they palpably failed to do in his predecessor's case and tell him that the time is up. Some believe that Mr Major, an able reader of opinion in the parliamentary party, would not need to be told.

The Prime Minister, however, may not be prepared to go quietly, if at all. In private he is saying that he has no intention of being forced out by bad European results.

None of the Cabinet contenders to replace him would want to make the first move: to do so would be seen as dangerous opportunism and assist their opponents. Who would tell him? Is the question on the lips of many Tory MPs.

If Mr Major survives that critical period he would then be free until the autumn. He would almost certainly carry out a big Cabinet reshuffle in July to freshen up his Government and hope for a better summer. As the economy recovers so could Mr Major's prospects.

That would be unlikely to prevent the irreconcilable critics of the Prime Minister trying to oust him. Within 14 days of the new parliamentary session, the stalking-horse would be led out of the stable to do his or her worst. If 34 MPs were still prepared to back a contest Mr Major would be close to being vanquished. If they were not he could still, against all odds, fight the next election as Prime Minister.

## Critical dates in the Prime Minister's diary

JOHN Major faces a political minefield in the months ahead (question marks denote dates not yet officially fixed):

- May 5 (?): Eastleigh by-election, caused by death of Tory Stephen Milligan. The Liberal Democrats are tipped to win.
- May 11-13: Scottish Tory Conference, Inverness.
- June 9: European Parliamentary elections.
- June 24-25: Euro summit in Corfu.
- July 8-10: G7 summit in Naples.
- July 21 (?): Mr Major's end-of-term address to 1922

backbench committee of Tory MPs.

- July 28 (?): Commons expected to rise for summer recess.
- October 11-14: Tory Conference in Bournemouth.
- October 17: Commons expected to return from summer recess.
- Late autumn: publication of Lord Justice Scott's enquiry into the arms-to-Iraq affair.
- November (?): State Opening of Parliament.
- October/November: any leadership election must take place within 28 days of opening of new session.
- Late November: Budget.
- December: Euro summit in Germany.

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## Major and Tories hit bedrock in poll

## Public opinion fails to bolster election hopes

BY PETER RIDDELL

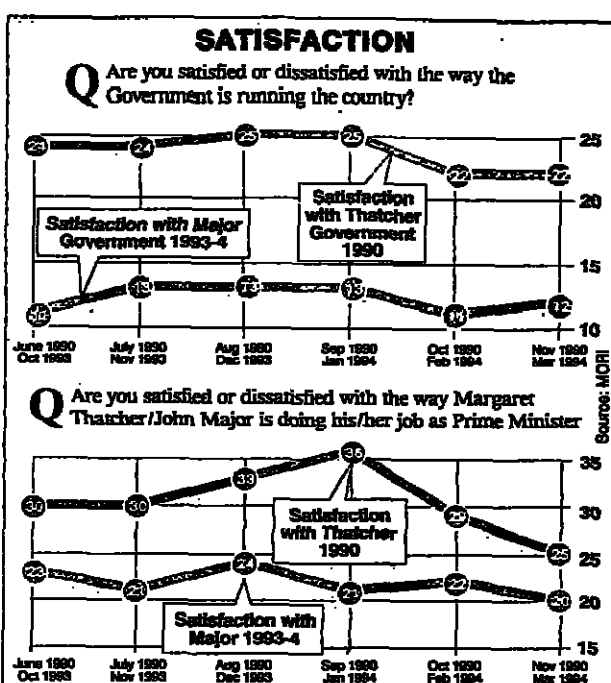
JOHN Major's approval rating with voters has fallen back to around the record low levels for any Prime Minister since last summer. Public satisfaction with his performance is now lower than with Margaret Thatcher just before she was forced out of Downing Street in November 1990.

The latest MORI poll for The Times was taken between last Friday and Monday, before Mr Major's leadership again came under question. The findings are unwelcome news both for Mr Major personally and for the Conservatives in the run-up to the local elections on May 5 and the European Parliament elections on June 9. They suggest that there is no sign of an improvement in their ratings.

The Tories have now been bedeviled at around the same level of bedrock support since last May. They now stand on 28 per cent, compared with 49 per cent for Labour (up two points on the past month, and its highest since October 1990).

The Liberal Democrats are now on 20 per cent, down a point over the past month. This also appears to be a hard-core level since the party has been largely out of the public spotlight since last autumn, apart from the election row over Tower Hamlets Liberal Democrats.

Looking ahead to the European elections, MORI has this month asked people which party they think they will support on June 9 if they vote. Labour is ahead on 47 per cent, with the Tories on 30 per cent and the Liberal Democrats on 19 per cent. This



represents a 6 per cent swing from Tories to Labour since the last Euro-elections in 1989 and points to sizeable further Tory losses.

As many as one in five are undecided how they will vote then. MORI asked how likely people were to go along and vote on June 9: 27 per cent say they are certain to vote and 17 per cent very likely to vote.

These findings are very similar to the result of a similar poll in May 1989, before the Euro-elections then. The turnout was 36 per cent in 1989.

Of those saying they are certain to vote, just 27 per cent report that they will back the Tories, 50 per cent Labour and

18 per cent the Liberal Democrats.

The regular national poll shows that the Tories and Labour are virtually level pegging among the ABC1 middle classes, normally the bedrock of the Tory vote. The Tories are only ahead by 36 to 32 per cent among the AB professional middle classes.

Labour has further increased its lead among owner-occupiers to a 42 to 33 per cent margin. Even among the quarter of voters who own their houses outright without a mortgage, the two parties are level pegging. This reflects the erosion of Tory support among pensioners.

The latest poll also underlines the problems facing Mr Major personally. Merely a fifth of voters are satisfied with the way he is doing his job as Prime Minister with 72 per cent per cent dissatisfied. These are his worst ratings since July last year, which were the lowest ever for any Prime Minister.

Mr Major's personal ratings in recent months have been consistently lower than Lady Thatcher's just before her fall from power.

Even among the reduced band of Tory supporters, Mr Major is doing badly. Only a half are satisfied with the way he is doing his job with 42 per cent dissatisfied. This is only marginally better than last July. Lady Thatcher again enjoyed higher ratings among Tory supporters. Until the final week of her premiership, she was rated by seven out of ten expressed satisfaction with her performance.

Mr Major appears to be stuck and unable to shift the public's view of him in a favourable direction after the battering he took last year over the Maastricht saga and the continuing criticism of his leadership.

John Smith, the Labour Party Leader, has failed to inspire voters. His rating remains evenly balanced with 38 per cent of the public in favour and against, but three-fifths of Labour voters approve of his performance. Paddy Ashdown continues to enjoy a positive rating, both from the public and from Liberal Democrat supporters.

William Rees-Mogg, page 18



Power dressing: Kenneth Clarke made should wear at Madame Tussaud's in his own fashion statement when he London. Sporting a pinstripe suit, the suggested which clothes his dummy Chancellor chose well-worn beige suede shoes, crumpled dark green corduroy trousers and an old tweed jacket for his addition to the waxworks' Cabinet team.

## Runners in Downing Street sweepstake

**Michael Heseltine**  
Age: 61  
Post: President of the Board of Trade  
CV: Businessman  
Form: Surprised comeback after pit closures and heart attack. Outshone rivals in Plymouth. Has successfully wooed Tory right with promise of renewed radicalism. Unlikely to suffer much for backing Cabinet compromise deal over voting rights. Experienced campaigner. Apparent reluctance to come under starters' orders only skin deep.  
For: Glamour, self-confidence, experience, oratory, drive. Against: Age, health, erraticism, vanity, hauteur.  
Odds: 9/4

**Michael Portillo**  
Age: 40  
Post: Chief Secretary to the Treasury  
CV: Professional politician  
Form: Slipped back of late. Foreign-bashing gaffe and flag-waving speech earlier this year raised questions about judgment and maturity. Remains darling of the Thatcherite wing and is seen as next leader but one. Strong agenda and persuasive dispatch box manner. Spending hawk and tax-cutter. Promises tough Euro-sceptic stance.  
For: Glamour, ideological grip, vision. Against: Age, inexperience, low public profile, aloofness, ideologue.  
Odds: 10/1

**Kenneth Clarke**  
Age: 53  
Post: Chancellor  
CV: Barrister  
Form: Disappointing of late after masterly gallop through November Budget. Retains a strong following on centre-left.

**Michael Howard**  
Age: 52  
Post: Home Secretary  
CV: Barrister  
Form: Has hit a few fences of late. Forced into retreat over police and courts reform. Claims Thatcherite credentials, but has failed to convince right-wingers. Minister since 1985. Cabinet since 1990.  
For: Intellect, clarity of purpose, populist touch. Against: Cautious, superficial.  
Odds: 10/1

**Douglas Hurd**  
Age: 64  
CV: Diplomat  
Post: Foreign Secretary  
Form: Reputation among Tories untarnished by voting rights fiasco. Safest pair of hands in the Government. Minister since 1979. Cabinet since 1984. Reluctant

**Virginia Bottomley**  
Age: 46  
Post: Health Secretary  
CV: Social worker  
Form: Has cantered surprisingly easily through NHS minefield. Energetic, ambitious, publicity mad.  
For: Looks, effort, drive, charm, political skills, common-sense. Against: Public doubt her sincerity, a slave to political fashion.  
Odds: 50/1

**Kenneth Baker**  
Age: 59  
CV: Businessman  
Form: Star has waned since being sacked from Cabinet in 1992. Began life as a Heathite and ended Cabinet career as most loyal of Thatcherites. Good bet as stalking horse.  
Odds: 100/1

## Britain focuses on law and order fears

PUBLIC concern about law and order has risen sharply over the past month to equal its previous highest ever level. The latest MORI poll for The Times shows that the proportion of voters mentioning law and order as among the most important issues facing Britain has risen from 26 to 34 per cent over the past month. This equals the previous high recorded a year ago and in June 1988. These findings underline the Government's challenge in reassuring the public over crime.

The number of voters mentioning unemployment has declined in recent months and is now at its lowest level for nearly two years. This follows a steady drop in the overall number out of work. But unemployment is still top of a list of important issues. Voters remain unconvinced out the strength of the

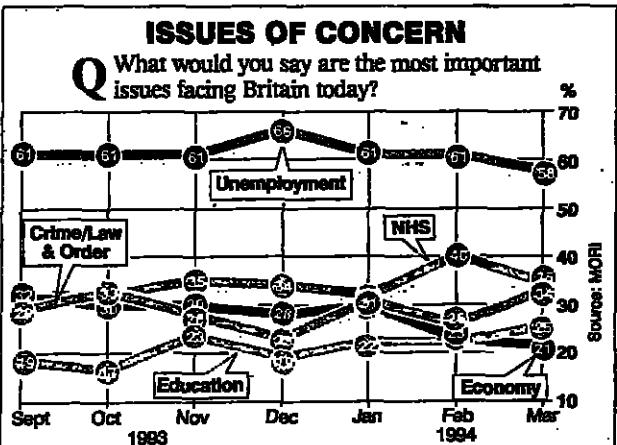
economic recovery. The economic optimism index is still negative and is stuck at its lowest level since early last year. The index measures the balance between those who think that the general economic condition of the country will

improve rather than get worse over the next 12 months. This index is now minus 14 points, the same as in February, with less than a quarter of the public expecting an improvement over the next year. The other change is the

sharp rise in mentions of Europe, up from 4 to 12 per cent since the end of February. This reflects the greater public focus on Europe recently in view of the row over voting rights. While this is the highest number of mentions of Europe since the Maastricht row a year ago, the issue still only ranks sixth on voters' lists of important issues.

One in ten mention taxation, an issue which is likely to gain much greater attention in the coming weeks.

MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 1,562 adults at 149 constituency sampling points across Britain. Interviews were conducted face-to-face on March 24 to 28. Data were weighted to match the profile of the population. Voting intention figures exclude those who say they would not vote (8 per cent), are undecided (7 per cent) or refuse to name a party (2 per cent). © MORI/The Times



## Easter recess lets the passions cool

BY ALICE THOMSON, POLITICAL REPORTER

AS THE potential contenders for John Major's job take to the airwaves to deny having any interest in succeeding him, their holiday plans for the 11-day Easter recess tell a different story.

Kenneth Clarke, clearly reluctant to take over the party while it is at such a low ebb, is departing promptly for the beaches of Greece with his wife this weekend to let the political temperature cool. The Chancellor will then spend the rest of the week in Athens at an informal meeting of European finance ministers smoothing ruffled feathers.

The President of the Board of Trade, who was particularly coy about his leadership prospects on BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme yesterday, is taking no chances. Michael Heseltine, knowing the next couple of months could be his last chance to lead, will not be heading for Fiji, Venice or Thailand, some of his favourite destinations, to top up his blonde highlights and tan.

Instead, Mr Heseltine will be remaining by the telephone on call for further radio interviews and a press conference on VAT on fuel at the end of the week. Any spare moments will be spent pottering around his arboretum at Thenford House in north Oxfordshire encouraging new growth.

Margaret Thatcher was conferring in Paris when her leadership crisis broke and John Major was in the

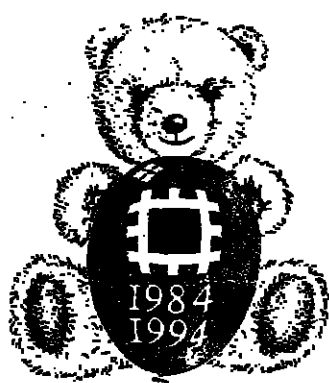
dentist's chair having his wisdom teeth out when he was asked to put his name forward for leader.

When he returns from Belfast, the Prime Minister will be playing safe, clinging on to the reins during the Easter recess, from his house in Great Stokeley, Cambridgeshire. He will make sure he does not wander 80 miles to the east, where he could easily bump into Tony Mawlow, the Tory MP for Northampton North who called for Mr Major's resignation this week.

Virginia Bottomley, the Health Secretary, who has suffered several savage press interviews in recent weeks, is going back to the family clan on the Isle of Wight to recuperate and take stock.

Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, has forfeited his holiday and will be trying to patch things up with a foreign visit later in the week before cranking up for the Euro-campaign.

Other contenders have opted for a final fling abroad before the slog of the local and European elections in the next two months. Michael Portillo, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, has refrained from giving any speeches to students over the next two weeks and will be going to Morocco with his wife and friends, leaving Stephen Dorrell, the Treasury minister, to cope with any irate phone calls when the tax bills arrive after the weekend.



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## Istanbul will test pious promises of Islamic mayor

FROM ANDREW FINKEL IN ISTANBUL

CITIZENS of Istanbul and Ankara were yesterday coming to terms with the takeover of their cities by pro-Islamic mayors.

Metu Fadilliglu, doyen of Istanbul's night life, is probably typical of the now more sanguine mood of the city's voters who opted for parties other than the religious Welfare Party in Sunday's local elections. "They still have to collect our rubbish," he said from one of the fashionable clubs he owns, but confessed that the new municipal authorities could make life difficult if they chose.

The opposite is also true. Istanbul, with a population of more than ten million, growing at the estimated rate of 350,000 a year, will also make or break the Welfare Party, which campaigns on a platform of Islamic piety and social justice. In the past, Istanbul has proved a poisoned chalice. No mayor has ever been re-elected and only one has even been re-nominated. The failure of the outgoing Social Democratic mayor to end a system of petty corruption and big pay-offs is one of the explanations being offered for the disastrous performance of his party.

In Ankara, cradle of a Turkish republicanism that in

the past has included an intolerance of religious observance, celebrations of a victory by a few thousand votes have been ecstatic. Many believe that the Welfare Party has earned its chance by the efficient administration of boroughs in Istanbul and towns elsewhere. Even so, they are unlikely to find the resources to cope with large conurbations easy to come by. This is in part because Turkey is about to embark on an austerity programme.

The previous mayor of Ankara was able to raise £435



Ciller, Welfare Party is closing the gap

million on international markets, chiefly by convincing Standard & Poors, the international credit rating agency, that the national Government would not allow the capital to default.

Not only will his Welfare Party successor have difficulty making the same argument, but Standard & Poors itself recently downgraded Turkish debt for the second time this year, this time to below investment level.

One estimate is that Istanbul has to find £75 million very soon if it is to stand a chance of meeting the city's water requirements within the next two years. Part of the problem is that the area which should be the reservoir catchment area has tens of thousands of houses on it, many of whose occupants are supporters of the Welfare Party.

Counting is still continuing from last Sunday's local elections and the gap between the main parties appears to be much narrower than suggested by earlier returns.

With 19 per cent of the vote, the Welfare Party is only one percentage point behind from the principal opposition Motherland Party, and only two points behind from the True Path Party of Tansu Ciller, the Prime Minister.

## Enquiry opens into Kashmir blast

FROM REUTERS IN SRINAGAR

THE Indian army began an investigation yesterday into a blast that ripped through an army camp in Srinagar, Kashmir, and killed at least 13 soldiers, including a major general.

An army spokesman said a preliminary examination of the site of the blast at the Badamiyah base suggested the explosion was an accident, but that no one was yet ruling out sabotage. The blast occurred while officers were inspecting weapons and explosives captured from Muslim separatists fighting against Indian rule of Jammu and Kashmir.

Kashmiri police believed 16 people were killed, including a woman, but there was no confirmation of that figure from the army. Among the dead was Major General Estace Fernandez, three colonels and a major. The Pioneer newspaper said Fernandez had been due to take over as chief of military intelligence on Friday.

The explosion sparked a blaze that spread to neighbouring barracks and an office block in the high-security camp, where one large, L-shaped building was used to store seized weapons, including rocket-propelled grenades. The camp houses soldiers fighting the four-year-old Islamic uprising in mainly Hindu India's only Muslim-majority state. More than 16,000 people have been killed since the rebellion began in 1990.



An Indian soldier outside a government office set alight by separatists in Srinagar

## Conflicts cloud talks on Hebron

BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER MIDDLE EAST CORRESPONDENT

CONFUSION surrounded the troubled Middle East peace process yesterday about whether Palestinian and Israeli officials had or had not reached a draft accord at secret talks in Cairo on new security measures for the 120,000 Arab inhabitants of the occupied West Bank city of Hebron.

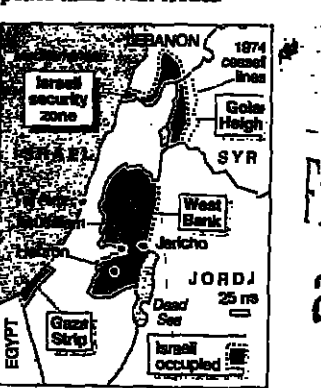
Yossi Beilin, the Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister, told the BBC on a visit to India that a accord had been reached. He said that, as a result of the draft accord, intended to curb the introduction of international observers as well as Palestinian police into Hebron, it was hoped that it plans for an Israeli withdrawal from Jericho and the Gaza Strip would soon proceed.

The confusion arose when Marwan Kawafani, a senior Palestine Liberation Organisation official in Tunis, denied reports from PLO sources. Cairo that the size of the new Palestinian police force had been agreed. The reports of a compromise had been reached and that the for, operating under overall Israeli control, would be 100 strong.

The differences in the reports were a reflection of a secrecy surrounding the talks, which many PLO officials opposed because of Moudas shooting of six Palestinians in Gaza and subsequent violence there. The differences also highlighted the PLO's problems of communication.

Negotiations to complete plans for the Israeli pullback in Jericho and Gaza were suspended by the PLO on the February 25 Hebron mosque massacre, in which some 30 Arabs were shot by Jewish settlers. The latest talks about talks in Cairo were placed in jeopardy by a Gaza shooting, in which members of the Fatah faction of the PLO led by Yasser Arafat were shot dead by undercover soldiers.

The shootings and subsequent mass protests further undermined the credibility of the PLO leader, who turned down many requests from his supporters to abandon the attempt to reopen peace talks with Israel.



## Kuwait fury at veil ban for drivers

BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER

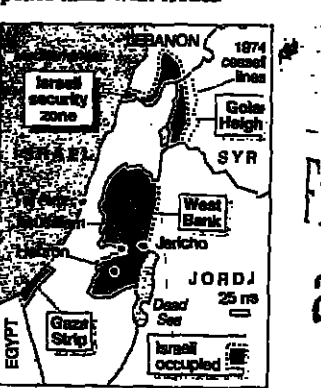
A WAVE of protests has swept Kuwait after the government ordered a crackdown on women drivers wearing the Islamic veil.

The move is described as an attempt to reduce accidents. Police said 287 people were killed in 16,017 traffic accidents in 1992 and 290 in 15,921 accidents last year.

But it is also seen as an attempt by the ruling al-Sabah family to hold back the spread of Muslim fundamentalism since the Gulf War that has already led to a bizarre dispute about the wearing of the veil by female medical students.

Islamic students at Kuwait University protested on Monday and threatened a 48-hour strike after police raided the campus for two days in succession and handed out tickets to veiled women drivers, many in expensive cars.

Although women in Kuwait are banned from voting, they are still regarded as among the most liberated in the conservative Gulf states.

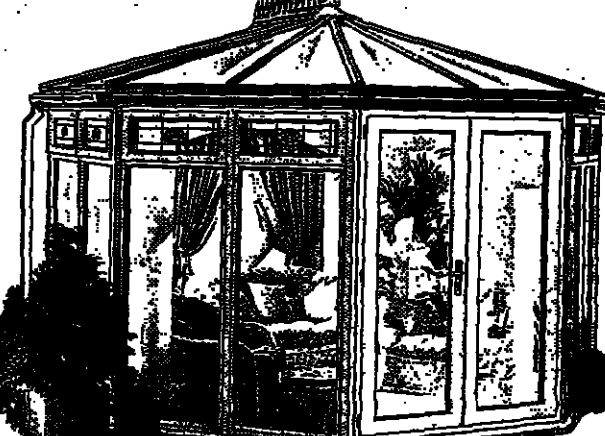


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## ANC accuses Inkatha leaders of being prepared to drown South Africa in blood

## De Klerk to declare emergency in Natal

FROM MICHAEL HAMLYN IN PRETORIA

HAVING taken control of two troublesome homelands, President de Klerk was last night on the verge of declaring a state of emergency in Natal, the first time it has been used in South Africa since similar nationwide measures were lifted in October 1990.

With Bophuthatswana and Ciskei under central government control and South African troops on the streets of the small homeland of Quana, the deteriorating situation in Natal has illustrated to Pretoria the fragility of the situation. After yesterday's Cabinet

yesterday reported a further 15 political killings in Natal, putting the total for the week at about 75. The Human Rights Commission, which publishes a monthly digest of such statistics, has already recorded 266 political deaths so far this month.

The ANC said: "A systematic campaign of violence and bloodshed has been mounted in order to undermine the conditions in which voting rights can be freely exercised on April 27, and to prevent free voter education and campaigning before that day." The organisation noted that: "States of emergency under various National Party governments hitherto have been used to stifle all legitimate and peaceful political activity."

"The ANC is encouraged by the TEC pronouncements on the matter that such a declaration will not undermine the democratic rights of all citizens to assemble, campaign, speak and publish their opinions peacefully and without any legal restriction," it said.

Velaphi Ndlovu, a minister in the KwaZulu government, strongly criticised the TEC, saying the state of emergency would not end the violence but would create more problems in the region. He said the intention was to topple the KwaZulu government.

The white right also predicted further tension. The imposition of a state of emergency signalled that negotiations had failed and the elections should be cancelled, said Koos Kemp, an official of the Afrikaner Volksfront. Mr Kemp said: "It would be viewed as a method through which the South African police and the SA Defence Force are misused to help the African National Congress/SA Communist Party with 'Operation Sunrise' to suppress the Zulu king and Mangosuthu Buthelezi's efforts... and to intimidate the Zulu people."

War footing, page 1



Members of South Africa's racially-mixed National Peace Keeping Force playing volleyball at their training camp near Bloemfontein

## Old foes unite in peacekeeping force

FROM SAM KILEY IN BLOEMFONTEIN

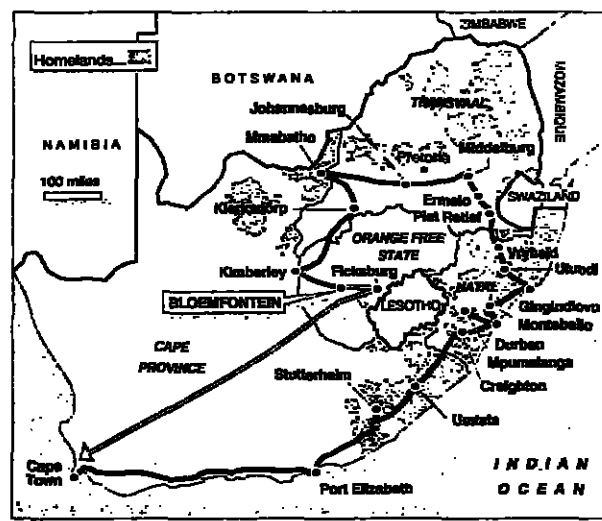
The former South African army sergeant-major who recently transferred to the National Peace Keeping Force (NPKF), in which armies that once opposed one another have been forged into a United Nations-type security service, pointed to the soldiers and said: "Look at these people. They're nothing but baboons. We call them Jack — just another confused kaffir. Still, you've got to admit, they make helluva good soldiers. The best."

His contradictory views reflected the quick volte face members of Umkonto we Sizwe (MK), the African National Congress's military wing, and soldiers from the South African Defence Force (SADF) have had to undergo. The few weeks they have spent training together have been a voyage of discovery for many of the soldiers that, notwithstanding the violence

in the rest of the country (notably in KwaZulu-Natal where another nine bodies, victims of political violence, were discovered yesterday) has filled the NPKF with genuine hope for the new South Africa.

There is more good will than ill about the drastic changes that the April elections will bring. Across the country poor whites living in urban areas find themselves sitting across coffee tables from their black colleagues, discussing everyday concerns such as the state of education and rates of tax, their bosses and the office gossip.

During the slow death of apartheid, poor whites, who had the most to fear from job competition from blacks, have been the first to accept the realities of the new order. The middle classes, of which black people form a tiny minority, remain nervous



about issues such as positive discrimination. But when, as is the case the NPKF, people are forced to work together (few of the 5,000 troops were genuine volunteers) they have found it surprisingly easy to forget old enmities

and racial stereotypes. "A year ago you would not have got me to sit next to this man even if you pointed a gun at my head. He was a commie, a black, and the enemy. Now we're buddies. It's not forced; we have a job to do and find

that as professional soldiers we have a lot in common," said Lieutenant Colonel Quinton Painter, formerly of the SADF, as he lit a cigarette for Lieutenant Colonel George Sibanyoni, ex-Umkonto we Sizwe.

The first three battalions of the NPKF peacekeeping force, which may form the nucleus of a new South African defence force integrating a wide variety of conventional and guerrilla forces, is expected to be deployed in the Witwatersrand area within the next week or two.

"We are ready, and looking forward to it. But one thing is certain. We won't be going to Natal. Our guys would get squashed like flies there. Natal is a job for the special forces and tanks," said the white training officer.

This is the last article in the series from Sam Kiley's journey around South Africa



ELECTION COUNTDOWN

meeting, Mr de Klerk was due to hold a media briefing in the capital's Union Building to explain the decision, but he postponed it until this morning. Officials suggested that additional legal steps were needed before the announcement could be made.

The Transitional Executive Council (TEC) called for the imposition of such an emergency at its weekly meeting on Tuesday, when it heard reports of the hardening opposition to the holding of elections by Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Chief Minister of KwaZulu and leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP).

Cyril Ramaphosa, secretary-general of the African National Congress (ANC), said yesterday: "We would want the state of emergency to be declared right away. It is quite clear that the Chief Minister and the IFP are determined to drown the country in blood in their determination to stop the election from taking place." Police

## First Lady's trade profit adds to ratings slide

FROM WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU IN WASHINGTON

HILLARY Clinton turned a paltry initial investment of \$1,000 (£660) into a profit of \$100,000 within a period of nine months in a series of speculation deals during the late 1970s, it emerged yesterday.

Her investment profits in the highly volatile market of battle futures have bewildered many of her erstwhile supporters, especially women and young people. President Clinton himself also stands accused of hypocrisy, since during the election campaign he ranted against the speculation frenzy in the 1980s, a decade he described as "the gilded age of greed and selfishness".

Mrs Clinton was guided through her extraordinary commodity trading by James Blair, a lawyer for Tysons Food, an Arkansas company. The company was among the most heavily regulated by the Arkansas administration, then headed by Mr Clinton. This has raised questions on whether Tysons Food might have lent a helping to the Clintons in return for favourable treatment.

The First Lady's problems were compounded further after it became known that her commodities broker had been suspended for three years

from the Chicago Mercantile Exchange in December 1979. Robert Bone, a broker at an Arkansas office of Refco, a commodity brokerage, was accused by regulators of wrongly allocating winning and losing trades, thereby effectively determining himself which of his clients were winners and losers.

Mr Bone's activities raised suspicions over whether Mrs Clinton might have been the beneficiary of such misallocation to the detriment of other investors. A White House official insisted that she "had no knowledge of any allocation of trades... She lost

New York: Bill Gates, the billionaire founder of the Microsoft computer empire, is being spoiled for choice for a publisher of his book about the "information superhighway" (Ben Macintyre writes). Mr Gates, who became America's youngest billionaire at 31, is demanding an advance of \$2.5 million (£1.7 million) and a first print run of half a million copies, but there is no lack of interest from New York publishers and a deal is expected to be announced by the end of this week.

money in that account on several trades. Beyond that, we really know nothing about it." While there is no evidence that Mrs Clinton was the beneficiary of a fraud scheme, the deal has raised eyebrows among experts in the futures markets.

The latest flurry surrounding the Clintons' private business dealings was prompted by an article in *Newsweek* magazine which incorrectly asserted that Mrs Clinton began her series of investments with no money of her own. *Newsweek* later admitted "an honest mistake" by placing too much trust in its main source, a tax expert.

The White House on Tuesday released the documents about the futures investment in 1978 and 1979, which showed that Mrs Clinton began her lucky series with an upfront investment of \$1,000. It said this was proof that Mrs Clinton "assumed the full risk of loss".

Mrs Clinton's approval ratings have dropped significantly. During March her "unfavourable" rating reached 42 per cent, the highest since Mr Clinton took office. Her support is dwindling, particularly among women, according to a USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll.



North: confident

## North lays early claim to Virginia

BY IAN BRODIE

AMERICA'S most entertaining Senate race took another erratic turn yesterday when Oliver North declared victory in the Republican nomination for Virginia two months before the ball.

Colonel North, the charismatic retired Marine Corps lieutenant colonel who was at the heart of the Iran-Contra scandal, claimed to have 4,479 delegates pledged to vote for him, 90 more than needed to carry the June convention.

Jim Miller, a stolid Republican loyalist who is battling Colonel North for the nomination, dismissed the victory claim as "silly". The pledges were not binding, he said.

## Merlin's healers plot secret Afghan mission

BY EVE-ANN PRENTICE, DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A NEW rapid-reaction aid organisation, seen as Britain's answer to Médecins sans Frontières, is about to embark on a secretive mission to Afghanistan.

Medical Emergency Relief International, known as Merlin, is the brainchild of Dr Christopher Besse, a former London GP, Nicholas Mellor, a biochemist, and Mark Dalton, an aid worker. Since it was formed just over a year ago it has helped hundreds of thousands of people in some of the most hostile areas in the world.

The group, with a permanent staff of nine, is to send a trauma surgeon, anaesthetist, surgical nurse and two or three other volunteers to a city south of Kabul where one 12-bed hospital is vainly trying to cope with up to 40 civil war casualties a day among a population of 300,000. The shifting front lines in the Afghan conflict are forcing the team to travel "a little under cover". Caroline Horn, Merlin's spokeswoman, said yesterday: "It is a sensitive area and we are not even naming the city".

"We are looking at the forgotten places where a small organisation can get to work quickly," Dr Besse said yesterday in Toms, western Siberia, where he and four colleagues are trying to quell a tuberculosis epidemic. One in three patients at a 2,000-bed hospital in the city is dying of the disease, which has been partly spread by the release of hundreds of prisoners.

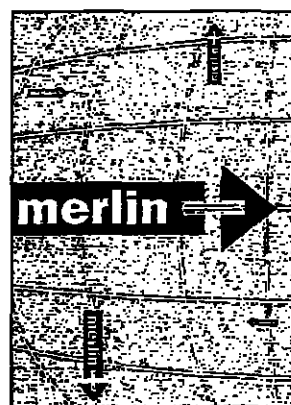
"In its early stages, TB is easily treated and this is where an organisation like ours can help. Large ones, such as Oxfam, do marvellous work, but they can take time to mobilise and then you are faced with a far larger problem," Dr Besse said.

Merlin last year supervised the delivery of a food consignment to Bosnia-Herzegovina, but the group balks at further involvement in the former Yugoslav republic. "We have to be convinced that we will be able to make a significant impact on the situation," Dr Besse said. "Supplies are no good if they are held up and stolen; surgeons cannot work without electricity. Effectively, one sanitation or electrical engineer could do far more than whole groups of doctors."

Surgeons and other doctors who volunteer to work on assignments for Merlin are paid about £450 a month. "Our main problem is getting doctors and nurses out of the NHS system, because health service administrators see working abroad as one big holiday. They are very reluctant to let people go and keep their jobs open for them when they return."

By the end of this year, Merlin aims to be able to reach victims of war, earthquakes or other crises within 72 hours. It is funded by the Overseas Development Administration, which will give it £452,000 this financial year, the European Community Health Organisation and Unicef. An ODA spokesman said yesterday: "We think they are very professional and effective."

Any donations should be sent to Merlin, 49 Portland Road, London W11 4LJ.



The Merlin logo

## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Singapore ignores plea for leniency

Washington: The Singapore government has refused to intervene in the case of Michael Fay, an American teenager who has been sentenced to six strokes of the cane for vandalism, in spite of an appeal for leniency from President Clinton. In urging Singapore to think again about the flogging, Mr Clinton said: "We believe that based on the facts and the treatment in other, similar cases, this punishment is extreme."

Fay, 18, pleaded guilty to spray-painting cars and receiving stolen flags and road signs. He was sentenced to four months in prison and fined £1,480 in addition to the caning, which is carried out on the bare buttocks with a rattan rod that rips the skin. Asian, page 16

## Moscow blast

Moscow: One person died and five were wounded when a bomb exploded in a car parked less than a mile from President Yeltsin's new Moscow flat, officials said. The incident was believed to be a criminal act rather than terrorist attack. (AP)

## Rebel returns

Bangkok: Myint Muang, 55, a senior member of Burma's outlawed government-in-exile, has given himself up to the Burmese embassy in Bangkok and is being sent back to Rangoon, according to Burmese rebel sources on the Thai border. (Reuters)

## Rights accord

Mexico City: The Guatemalan government and leftist rebels signed a human-rights accord allowing a UN mission to be set up inside the Central American country, boosting hopes of ending 33 years of civil war by the end of this year. (Reuters)

## Envoy missing

Bangkok: A Russian diplomat is missing in Bangkok with a laptop computer and secret embassy information. Police said Igor Makeev, 39, third secretary at the Russian embassy, has been missing from his flat for just over a week. (Reuters)

## Elgin pledge

Athens: American-born film director Jules Dassin, widower of the actress-politician Melina Mercouri, has said he will attempt to fulfil his wife's dream of having the Elgin marbles returned from London and housed in a new Acropolis museum. (AP)

## Ban lifted

Kuala Lumpur: Malaysia has lifted its ban on the Oscar-winning Holocaust film *Schindler's List*, but it is still uncertain whether the film will be screened because Steven Spielberg, the director, opposes cuts demanded by Malaysian censors. (Reuters)

## Joint exercise

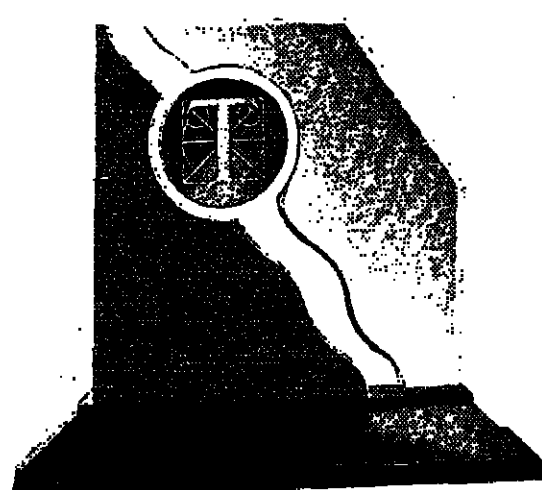
Kuala Lumpur: The Royal Navy and the RAF will join exercises with Malaysia under the Five Power Defence Agreement in spite of the strained relations between London and Kuala Lumpur. (Reuters)

## Lethal cocktail

Melbourne: Patricia Robertson, 53, an Australian grandmother, was jailed for 15 years for murdering her foster son, Kenneth Smith, 25, with a cocktail of ginger wine laced with weedkiller to benefit from his will and estate. (Reuters)

## Girls shot dead

Paris: Two schoolgirls died after being shot at a bus stop in Boudouaou near Algiers by gunmen who escaped on a motorcycle, the official news agency APS said. One of the girls died instantly, the other in hospital. (Reuters)



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# Tradition of brutality saps Russian army's morale



Stalin: purge undermined officers' esprit de corps

By MAX EASTERMAN

TODAY the West must increasingly confront the question of whether a disorganised and under-strength Russian Army poses more of a danger to European stability than the old Soviet war machine.

Today's Russian army faces an acute housing shortage for men returning from Eastern Europe: the destruction of the military-industrial complex as procurement of hardware has become economically unsustainable; the collapse of public confidence after the army's involvement in the siege of parliament at the White House last October, and a decline in officer morale. Above all, the army faces a crisis of morale in the ranks because of chronic bullying, a practice known in Russian as *dyedovshchina*.

For nearly 50 years the Soviet Union maintained one of the largest standing armies ever seen.

About three million men were under arms, drawn from populations as ethnically diverse as Latvians and Uighurs. The Soviet Army was not just a fighting machine, it was an essential part of a grand social experiment, the creation of *sovietski chelovek*, Soviet man.

In the past, even when, as in 1941, its morale had been poisoned by Stalin's purges of the officer corps and starved of equipment by his economic mismanagement, the army was rallied to save the nation by Russian patriotism and the state's opportunistic alliance with the Orthodox Church.

During the Afghan War, however, it became clear that something had gone wrong. The army was both brutal and brutalising. Conscripts were the lowest of the low in a system of ritualised bullying so violent that 5,000 men

■ The corrupt and demoralised Russian army faces widespread hostility and draft evasion by conscripts. What is needed is a smaller, professional force of committed volunteers

died on average every year from "accidents". About a fifth of the deaths were suicides by those who could take no more.

While investigating today's army practices, I met a former soldier called Alexei by his stall on a Moscow boulevard, where he sells *matroshka* dolls to tourists. He did his national service in the Urals, in a chemical warfare unit. The combination of bullying and tedium there have turned him from a lively teenager into a withdrawn 22-year-old. For him, *dyedovshchina* meant running errands for older conscripts — and regular beatings.

Others suffered far worse. Two youths who refused to obey their

elders were kicked to death. Another young man was driven by his torment to steal a gun and ammunition and shoot the five servicemen who had been beating him as well as the officer who tried to intervene.

I had heard similar stories muttered back in the bad old Soviet days. Since glasnost (not a word you hear much in Russia today), the truth is emerging. There is a stink of corruption as well as of violence: officers who were dealing on the black market found it convenient to put pressure on juniors to keep the other ranks in line however they could.

I talked to Yuri Deryugin, a military sociologist, who has been

studying *dyedovshchina* for some years. It had its genesis in the mid-1950s, when an amnesty was proclaimed for criminals. Unfortunately, Soviet prisons were heavily polluted with hierarchical bullying, and many former convicts became army conscripts.

Second-year conscripts would convene unofficial courts martial to deal with real or imagined infractions by their juniors, and sentence them to a beating, often on the buttocks with spoons or other metal implements. As senior officers tended at first to regard the whole thing as a game, the courts became more arbitrary and the punishments more vicious.

Even today, with many officers prepared to condemn these blatant abuses, 3,000 still die from suicides or beatings and the Ministry of Defence has begun to acknowledge the problem.

Russia has inherited about 80 per cent of the Soviet Army, but has less than half the gross

national product and manpower needed to maintain it. As a result, the army is nearly a million men under strength, according to the general staff. A third of that shortfall is caused by draft-dodging, for which the main reason is the fear of *dyedovshchina*.

Public meetings to counsel potential conscripts on how to avoid military service are common, and I was given a list of medical complaints being used by young men. A student told me how he had tricked the draft-board into thinking he was in Estonia.

The best solution is an all-volunteer, professional army, smaller, but more tightly run and efficient. But unless *dyedovshchina* is rooted out, the young Russians are not going to rally to a blood-stained flag.

Max Easterman's reports on the Russian army are being broadcast this week on The World Tonight on Radio 4

## UN seizes initiative on Krajina ceasefire

FROM TIM JUDAH IN BELGRADE AND JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

UNITED Nations military chiefs have moved swiftly to build on the ceasefire signed by Croat and Krajina Serb officials yesterday.

Commanders from the four UN peacekeeping sectors in Croatia met in Zagreb to begin planning deployments to police the truce, which starts on April 4. It is believed that 4,000 more "blue helmets" will now be needed in addition to the 14,000 already deployed.

The ceasefire was signed at the Russian Embassy in the Croatian capital after 18 hours of gruelling talks which involved both sides poring over maps and quarrelling over demarcation lines. "Our goal is fulfilled," said Slobodan Jarevic, the Krajina Foreign Minister. "Our armies probably will not fight anymore."

Hrvko Sarinic, head of the Croatian delegation, described the agreement — which involves the pullback of all heavy weapons and, for the first time, UN deployments along a 1,000-mile buffer zone — as "A first step towards complete normalisation of relations on the territory of Croatia." Vitali Churkin, the Russian special envoy, and Peter Galbraith, the US Ambassador to Croatia, were both present.

The UN Security Council is to extend Nato close air support to UN troops in Croatia as well as Bosnia-Herzegovina. The provision is contained in a draft resolution, likely to be adopted today, increasing the maximum authorised strength of the UN force in the former Yugoslavia so that more troops can be sent to consolidate peace in Bosnia.

The self-proclaimed Republic of Serbian Krajina (RSK) covers almost one third of

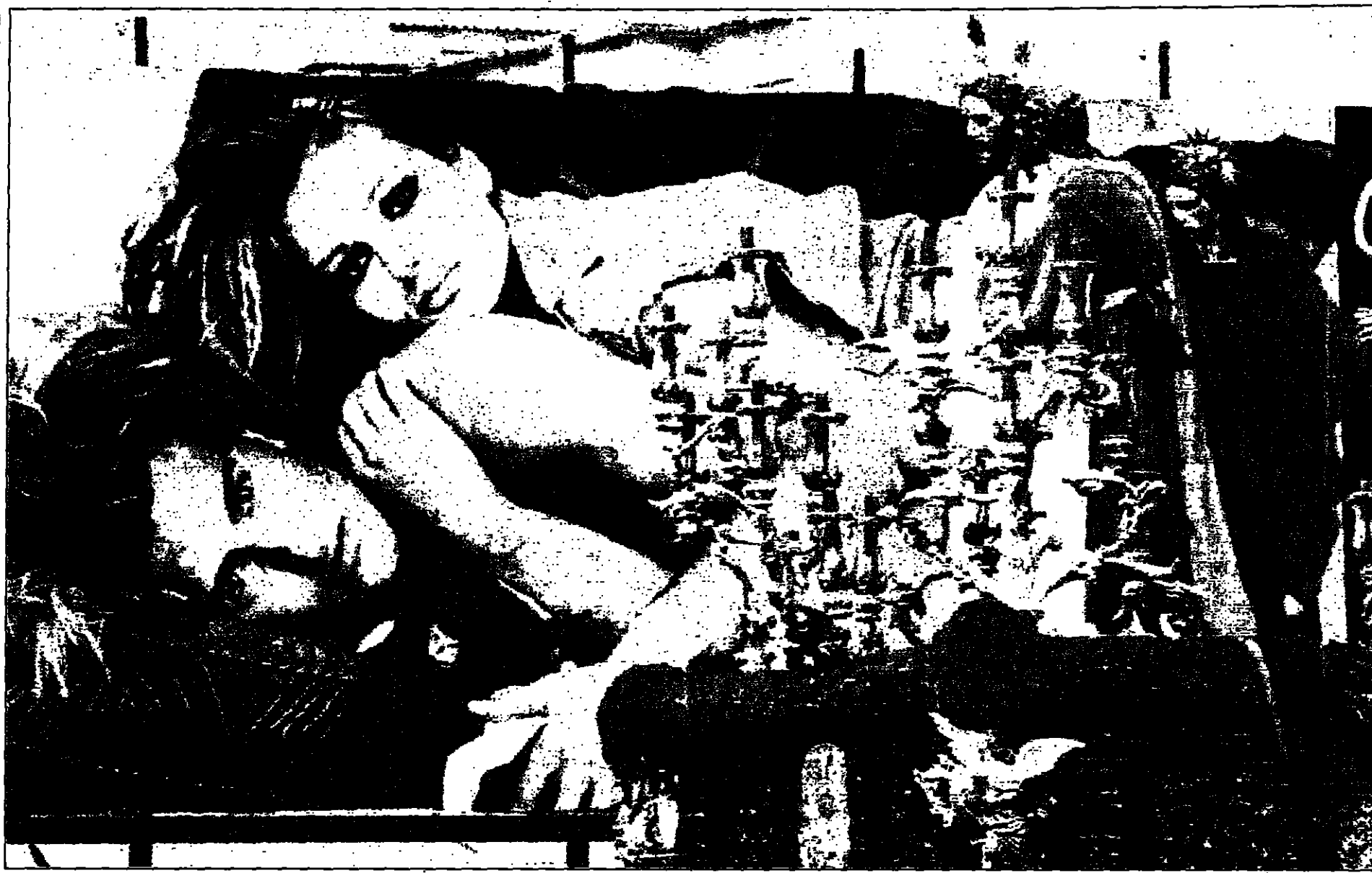
Croatian territory and was born in the bloody war of 1991. Under the terms of the plan brokered by Cyrus Vance, the former US Secretary of State, the Yugoslav army withdrew and Serb weapons were put under UN control. However, since the Croatian attack of January 1993 the Serbs have been in full possession of their weapons and low-level conflict has continued ever since.

The truce deal is the first part of a three-step negotiating process. The next phase, which could begin in two weeks, foresees discussions on economic links. The third stage talks are to be on Krajina's final political status.

RSK officials have always said that their aim is union with the Bosnian Serbs and Serbia. However, they are now coming under increasing pressure to consider reintegration with Croatia.

The Bosnian Serb army claimed that the Muslim-led Bosnian army was launching a general offensive across the country. They claimed that 10,000 Muslim troops were massing in the Gorazde area. Officials of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees reported that hundreds of Serb shells had fallen in Gorazde yesterday, and UN humanitarian aid convoys were suspended.

The Bosnian parliament meanwhile voted unanimously yesterday to set up a Croat-Muslim federation, ending a year of war between two of Bosnia's three ethnic factions. □ Troops offer: Britain has told the UN that, despite its heavy commitment in Bosnia-Herzegovina, it could provide several thousand more troops to UN peacekeeping operations around the world.



Clash of two cultures: The procession of the Confraternity of the Kiss of Judas, held each year in Holy Week in Seville, passes a poster advertising jeans

## Small-time Touvier shrugs off sins of Vichy regime

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN PARIS



Touvier: said he helped Jews by limiting deaths

MANY in France had hoped the trial of Paul Touvier, the wartime collaborator with the Nazis, would belatedly chronicle the sins of the Vichy government under Marshal Pétain, but after two weeks the lesson from the courtroom in Versailles is a more universal one of ordinary evil.

Perhaps, as some commentators are suggesting, it was too much to expect that the sordid tale of one small-time scoundrel could be used half a century later to confirm the complicity of a regime in the Nazi genocide.

A higher official than M. Touvier, a former railway worker who served in the pro-Nazi militia in Lyons, would have better served that purpose. Instead, the court is being presented a daily picture of a tired and self-pitying old man, with a selective or fading memory, who claims that he was a Christian who performed his duty in a terrible age and knew almost nothing of the systematic persecution of the Jews.

M. Touvier, who is 80 on Sunday, is accused of complicity in crimes against humanity. The charge is linked only to one event: the execution of seven Jewish men in the cemetery at Rillieux-la-Pape in June 1944 who were chosen by

the young Touvier, then the local intelligence chief, as a reprisal for the killing of Philippe Henriot, the Vichy propaganda chief.

For two days this week M. Touvier explained that he had acted under orders. He and his French colleagues had saved Jewish lives because the Germans had demanded 100 executions and they had reduced the number to seven. "I am not the slightest bit anti-Semitic," M. Touvier told Judge Henri Boulard, who has moved from neutrality to a prosecutorial tone. "You can

smear as much as you like, but I did not sleep that night," he said. "I have not forgotten." He had, he said, said prayers for the victims.

Asked if he felt responsible for the deaths, he said: "Not really... It was London which had Philippe Henriot assassinated. If the London people had not given the order, there would have been no Rillieux."

M. Touvier's placid rejection of responsibility and occasional irritation is angering the prosecutors and two dozen lawyers who are taking part in the trial as advocates of the victims and human rights organisations. They have tried to use the trial to depict the anti-Semitic nature of the Pétain state, which deported more than 75,000 Jews to Germany, and in particular of the paramilitary militia.

Jews, the court heard, were among other things, banned from public places and transport. Their children were not admitted to public playgrounds. M. Touvier said he was too busy to pay attention to the anti-Jewish laws. Robert Paxton, the US historian, told the court that the militia was effectively an extension of the SS and that the Pétain regime went further than the Germans had required in acts of repression.

## Moscow 'broke Markov promise'

By EVE-ANN PRENTICE  
DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

PRESIDENT Zhelnev of Bulgaria yesterday accused Russia of reneging on a promise to release KGB files on the 1978 "poison umbrella" murder of Georgi Markov, the Bulgarian dissident, in London.

"We were promised the KGB would open their archives, but we have noticed certain reservations and they seem to be going back on their promise," Dr Zhelnev said after arriving in London for a two-day visit. "Whenever we try to cast light on this case, we reach a dead end. We can't do without the Russian archives."

In November Major General Oleg Kalugin, the former KGB spy master, was arrested in London and questioned for 24 hours after being quoted as saying that he organised the operation to murder Markov. He was freed at the request of the Russian Foreign Ministry. Although Bulgarian secret police fired the pellet that killed Markov, the murder was planned in Moscow.

## Ten die in French nuclear sub blast

By CHARLES BREMNER

TEN French sailors were killed yesterday in an explosion on board a nuclear submarine as it took part in an exercise submerged in the Mediterranean between Corsica and Toulon.

All the victims were working in the electricity generator room of the *Emeraude*, a six-year-old vessel of 2,670 tonnes, when a steam leak triggered the accident, naval sources said. The submarine's nuclear machinery and weapons were not affected and it was able to surface and head back to Toulon under its own power, the Defence Ministry said. "In no way does this accident threaten the nuclear security

of the vessel," it added. The 230-ft *Emeraude*, which has a crew of 66, is one of six nuclear subs based at France's main Mediterranean naval port. At least two are constantly on patrol, armed with torpedoes and Exocet missiles.

The accident was the third involving a Rubis-class submarine in less than a year. On March 2 the *Améthysée* hit the seabed at low speed, damaging its bow. The navy sacked the commander of another nuclear-powered submarine which surfaced into a super-tanker last August, opening a gash in the tanker's bow that allowed oil to pour into the Mediterranean.

## Students keep up the pressure on Balladur

Paris: Faced with continuing student protests, Edouard Balladur, the French Prime Minister, yesterday abandoned the training-wage scheme which had provoked the wrath of the young (Charles Bremner writes).

Mr Balladur's decision came two days after he suspended the scheme and on the eve of a day of protest marches in Paris and provincial cities.

The government is replacing its plan, which would have dropped the minimum wage in return for training, with subsidies to companies offering first jobs to under-25s. Despite the climbdown by M. Balladur, whose support has dropped 12 per cent to 40 per cent, student leaders said last night they would keep their action and called for big turn-outs in today's marches.

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## Berlusconi confident of leading new government

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

SILVIO Berlusconi said he was confident of becoming Italy's next Prime Minister after a meeting with Umberto Bossi, head of the Northern League. Earlier the League had urged Berlusconi to sell off his vast business interests to avoid a conflict of interest if he did become Prime Minister.

Signor Bossi had earlier opposed the idea of Signor Berlusconi heading a government. But after the two met, Signor Berlusconi was asked if the Northern League would accept him, after all, as Prime Minister. He replied: "I think that was the conclusion of our meeting". Signor Bossi

was resigning as party secretary, saying that he had fulfilled his duty to salvage the party from its involvement in the corruption scandals.

Gianfranco Fini, the neo-Fascist National Alliance leader, has thrown his weight behind Signor Berlusconi's bid to head a government and has ruled out a proposal by Signor Bossi for Roberto Maroni, the League parliamentary whip, to become Prime Minister. Signor Berlusconi worked yesterday to try to recruit some of the 11 Italian life senators to his alliance to give himself an absolute majority in the upper house.

He hopes for support from Francesco Cossiga, the former President, Giulio Andreotti, the former Prime Minister, under investigation for links to the Mafia, and Giovanni Leone, the former President who resigned over a corruption scandal. President Scalfaro has called for new MPs to resolve their differences, amid fears a new election may have to be called if a stable government cannot be created.

League politicians have urged Signor Berlusconi to sell off his three private television stations, on the ground that his concentration of media power would lead to a serious conflict of interest if Forza Italia enters government.

The President is not expected to name a Prime Minister-designate until after April 15 when the new parliament meets. Twenty-five politicians who lost their seats in the elections could face arrest on corruption charges when the new parliament takes office.

Beppe Severgnini, page 18

### ITALIAN ELECTION

said more cryptically that "if everything goes as it should, we will soon be ready to give Italy a government". He added: "We first have to understand properly whether there is the chance of a common programme". Signor Bossi argues that he can impose conditions because two-thirds of the Forza Italia candidates elected in northern Italy were provided by the League.

The defeated centre and left-wing coalitions continued to ponder their defeat yesterday. Mino Martinazzoli, the head of the Italian Popular Party (PPI), the purged Christian Democrats, announced he

Tirana looks for British investment to boost already impressive growth rate

## Albanians seek Western help for Kosovo solution

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR



A peasant taking home a satellite dish and receiver in Ndroq, Albania, where 25,000 dishes have been sold in two years

PRESIDENT Berisha of Albania yesterday called on the West to make any lifting of sanctions against Serbia dependent on a settlement in Kosovo, where the Albanian majority complains of oppression by the Serbs.

Mr Berisha also called for the swift dispatch of United Nations monitors to the region, and for a dialogue leading to a status acceptable to all. It was only possible to prevent the Bosnian conflict spilling over into Kosovo if the European Union, Russia and America took action. He hoped that Russia would restrain the Serbs, as he feared that President Milosevic might stir up trouble in Kosovo to distract attention from Bosnia.

"For the moment, they are concentrating very much on Bosnia. I am asking them to shift their attention to Kosovo," Mr Berisha said. Speaking during a three-day visit to Britain, in which he discussed the Balkans with John Major, Mr Berisha said Albania wanted to keep out of any conflict, and that Kosovo Albanians were behaving with moderation.

He also called on Greece to lift the embargo on Macedonia, where there is an Albanian minority.



Berisha: hoping that Russia will restrain the Serbs

Albania has offered Skopje road access to the Adriatic. The closing of Salonika was a wrong decision, taken in a hurry, but Macedonia should make concessions in searching for a compromise with Athens.

Albania, with a 10 per cent growth rate, has been one of the former Communist world's economic success stories since Mr Berisha came to power two years ago. He said his mission in Britain was to encourage investment and Mr Major had

promised to boost British interests in Albania. "Shock therapy" had led to the privatisation of 93 per cent of the land. Mr Berisha pointed to a rapid increase in wheat production, from 220,000 tonnes in 1992 to 470,000 tonnes last year, and said Albania, where hunger led to rioting and attempted mass emigration three years ago, now had enough food to feed itself.

Mr Berisha conceded that there was still some way to go on achieving full human rights, but he rejected criticism of the recent jailing of two Albanian journalists, who he said had published state secrets.

One contentious issue remains Tirana's cancellation of a contract with the BBC to rebroadcast its Albanian-language services. Mr Berisha's government insists it wants the medium-wave slot for its own broadcasts and is offering to take only BBC reports for its own world round-up broadcasts. Irked by broadcasts of Albanian opposition views on a service which reaches 47 per cent of Albanian listeners, the government threatened last month to close down the BBC's newly installed FM transmitter outside Tirana.

## Multi-storey graveyards proposed after Athens cemeteries fill up

FROM MALCOLM BRABANT IN ATHENS

UNDERGROUND multi-storey graveyards have been proposed by the Greek Orthodox Church because of lack of space in Athens cemeteries.

Athens city council wants to introduce optional cremation as a means of dealing with cemetery congestion. But the church says it will not be persuaded into adopting this Western trend. "The only place where people burn," Jannis Hadzifotis, the Holy Synod spokesman, said "is

hell". Mr Hadzifotis has proposed narrower graves, or stacking bodies in multi-storey family tombs. The church has thwarted attempts to introduce cremation before, even during the heat wave of 1986 which killed more than 1,000 people whose decomposing bodies presented a health hazard. Then the church proposed burying them vertically instead of horizontally.

In Athens a grave is only rented for two or three years.

Then the corpse is dug up and, if the flesh has completely disappeared, the bones are removed and washed, sometimes in wine, placed in an ossuary and the grave is free for another body.

Cynics say the church objects to crematoriums because it would lose money from lavish funeral services, but the church looks like winning this battle for as long as the conservative Archbishop Seraphim remains as its Primate.

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# Confessions of a bent copper

Detective John Symonds made the headlines when *The Times* exposed him 25 years ago. Now he tells **Martin Short** of an entire force which was riddled with corruption

John Symonds has the friendly avuncular air you might expect of an honest, old-time copper. If you knew nothing about him, you might think he had spent his entire police career helping old ladies across the road, saying "Mind how you go".

In fact, he says, he spent much of his career sending men to prison on false evidence, committing perjury and taking bribes. None of this harmed his career as a detective in the Metropolitan Police in the 1960s. Indeed, he says it was an essential part of it, and he had every reason to expect it would help to win him promotion to the highest ranks of the CID. That is, until *The Times* blew his career apart.

On Saturday November 29, 1969, this newspaper carried the front page headline: "London policemen in bribe allegations". Tapes revealed planted evidence. Reporters Garry Lloyd and Julian Mounter believed they had proved that "at least three detectives are taking large sums of money in exchange for dropping charges, for being lenient with evidence in court, and for allowing a criminal to work unhindered".

Two of the detectives had blackmailed the criminal into giving them money after they had tricked him into putting his fingerprints on a stick of gellignite. The evidence against them would prove overwhelming, but the case against the third officer, Detective Sergeant Symonds, was not so substantial or clearcut. It boiled down to whether he had accepted £50 from the criminal during a conversation, taped by *The Times*, as they sat in a car outside a south London pub. By far the most significant thing in the entire story, however, was not whether any of the detectives was taken money: it was some remarks made by Symonds about a mysterious organisation which he called "the little firm in a firm".

"Always let me know straightaway if you want anything 'cos I know people everywhere, 'cos I'm a little firm in a firm. Don't matter where, anywhere in London, I can get on the phone to someone that I know I can trust, that talks the same as me." This "firm" was nothing less than a substantial number of the 3,000 detectives then serving in the Metropolitan Police.

Today Symonds, 58, lives abroad. He spent eight years in the 1970s overseas, on the run from a posse of senior crooked detectives who, he claims, had threatened to kill him if he had stayed to go on trial in 1972. Eventually he returned to England

and gave himself up. He was convicted and given a two-year jail term for taking £50 from the criminal wired up by *The Times*. He still protests his innocence.

Symonds is Britain's only self-confessed "bent" detective ever to go public. A former army officer, in 1956 he went straight from police training school to serve at the Bow Street station in central London, then "an absolute den of corruption", he claims. His devout moral upbringing was soon tested by the half-crowns traditionally dispensed by Covent Garden market porters so that point duty constables would turn a blind eye as they wheeled their barrows the wrong way down one-way streets.

Another accepted police racket was taking bribes from homosexuals. Symonds found out about this when, on "queer patrol" one night, he caught the Labour MP Tom Driberg committing a homosexual act with an actor. Symonds spurned a £5 note proffered by Driberg. He arrested the couple and took them to Bow Street.



John Symonds: "I lied practically every day"

## Tapes reveal planted evidence London policemen in bribe allegations

By GARRY LLOYD and JULIAN MOUNTER

Disturbing evidence of bribery and corruption among certain London detectives was handed by *The Times* to Scotland Yard last night.

It did not have to be someone who was guilty. As black-mail towards this end he tricked Mr. Smith into touching, and goes so far as to say...

blatant. He tells Mr. Smith: "... round here any time... anything you like, anything. Might give you a licence," and goes so far as to say...

vised at Camberwell, when *The Times* published its 1969 revelations. The article obliged Home Secretary James Callaghan to set up an inquiry, led by an incorruptible Home Office Inspector of Constabulary, Frank Williamson, formerly Chief Constable of Cumbria.

Symonds felt that senior corrupt detectives were offering him up as a sacrificial lamb, over a mere £50 when he was being investigated by men who had received hundreds of thousands of pounds. "What they wanted was for me to swallow a false charge, be wrongfully convicted, all to save them and their corrupt empires the promise was, when I came out, I'd be looked after. I could have a good life thereafter."

Symonds refused the deal. Subsequently, he says, he was visited by senior officers, who told him that, unless he did as instructed, he would be killed. He was told to leave the country and duck his trial. In return his corrupt colleagues would buy him off. "I accepted their offer because I was ill, weak, vulnerable... a sum of money was brought to my house: £2,000." He disappeared overseas with his girlfriend, just before the trial of the two other detectives named by *The Times*. "While we were

abroad, we read that they had been convicted: front page news, six and seven years, 'wicked evil men' and so on, and then the next article was 'Policeman flees with barmaid'."

For eight years Symonds roamed the world, living off his wits, while a new regime at Scotland Yard tried to deal with the "firm within the firm", forcing hundreds of detectives into early retirement. In 1977 Symonds's mentor, ex-Commander Ken Drury, was convicted of corruption and jailed for eight years, while his tormentor Chief Superintendent Bill Moody was convicted of accepting huge bribes and jailed for 12 years. In 1980 Symonds returned to England and did his time. When he came out of jail, he tried to put the record straight. Under immunity he named 150 other detectives as corrupt. A subsequent inquiry into just one of these officers took a year and proved inconclusive: 20 years after the events, it was impossible to gather sufficient evidence.

During his service John Symonds had known many honest coppers. What did the crooked "firm" that once riddled Scotland Yard do to their careers? "These were intelligent, decent honest people who worked as aids to CID and who had no idea why they were rejected... Well, maybe they realised, or maybe they didn't, but they'd failed because they hadn't passed the corruption test."

© Martin Short interviewed John Symonds for Carlton TV's *Gangsters* series

What use are studio audiences?

## I'm here only for the tea

I DON'T usually feel sorry for studio audiences. I feel that they deserve what they get. But tiered up blank and dismal behind the animated front-line speakers in last night's peculiar studio discussion programme *Elizabeth the Last* (BBC2), they exuded such a powerful sense of "Help, we are being held captive by Jeremy Paxman" and "But I only came in to ask the way to the toilets", that I found myself wanting to ring up the BBC and demand, "Let those people go home!"

For those who missed it, *Elizabeth the Last* concerned the dissolution of the monarchy, and was the pilot for an occasional series grandly entitled *The Radical Option*. Lined up on the republican side were Stephen Haseler and four henchpersons with a cleverly contrived mix of rhetorical styles — Anthony Holden (smooth), Michael Mansfield (sharp), Edgar Wilson (plainspeaking) and Tony Banks (hysterical). Seated opposite were Sir Bernard Ingham, Ant Leslie, Lord St John of Fawley and David Starkey, and between the nine of them they had a right old ding-dong, with Paxman at his mischievous best, inciting hostilities, waving his magic finger, barking "Oh come on's", and stopping just short of offering to hold the coats and specs.

Democracy was the thing at issue — we demand what's best for democracy, which might arguably be to sack the Queen, because she keeps her people subject. All the while, however, the irony was that a large silent majority sat utterly unnoticed in the studio, weirdly reminiscent of those scenes in period drama when the aristocrats glance around a chamber full of servants and say "We may speak privately, archbishop, there is not a living soul to hear us". Only four members of the audience had a chance to speak last night, and Paxman's reaction was either to turn his back before they had finished, or stop them by calling an abrupt end to the show. If only there had been subversives present. "Excuse me, can I ask a question?" one might have said. And then, "When do we get our tea and biscuits?"

I just don't understand it. Unless there is a chance of winning a fantastic holiday ("Where do we want to go?"

"Papua New Guinea?" "Where don't we want to go?" "Pencil!" it seems so strange that anyone would volunteer for a studio audience: it's like jury service without the time off work. Even attending a sitcom isn't as much fun as you might suppose. At a recording of Channel 4's *Terry and Julian* (yes, I admit it!) I thought I was doing the performers a supreme kindness by valiantly chuckling at the same joke repeatedly, but I later discovered that actually my charity was a waste of face cracks. On transmission, the tiny encouraging ho-hos had been obliterated by huge indiscriminate plasterings of canned laughter.

On a discussion programme, of course, the demoralising effect is even worse. Because either you reveal yourself to be a jumped-up nobody who enjoys the sound of his own voice (and whose wife in the next seat is mentally calculating her share of the house and car), or you squirm uncomfortably as if you came in by mistake ("I thought it was the queue for sub-aqua") or you appear to be a monomaniac who hasn't been listening ("But what about the pit ponies?"). None of these roles gives you a lot of credit with the viewer at home, and as for the visibly exasperated chairman, it drives him bonkers, especially when the banal views of an audience-member ("I think we should sack the whole lot of them, bunch of cowboys if you ask me") generally elicits the biggest cheers and raptures.

Such awkward audience participation satisfies a clamour for public accountability while at the same time demonstrating that it doesn't work. Which is why it's so fascinating to watch, I suppose. Last night, every time the camera turned to Lord St John of Fawley, there was another bloke's head just above his left shoulder — an audience member leaning forward, but with the appearance of a disembodied apparition, representing the silent oppressed who are always with us. Had Lord St John suddenly swivelled his view, he would undoubtedly have received the fright of his life. A shame this man was too old to mouth the words "Hello Mum" at the camera. Unfortunately, "Hello Mum" was about all that was required.



LYNNE TRUSS

Two cultures collide over Singapore's sentence of caning on an American, says **Ben Macintyre**

It is no easy task to act as the world's moral policeman when your squad car is covered in graffiti.

The case of an American teenager sentenced to be flogged by a Singaporean court for acts of petty vandalism has prompted deep offence and widespread anger in America.

A grim if familiar incident last weekend in which two Japanese teenagers were shot dead during a car-jacking in a Los Angeles suburb has provoked a similarly outraged reaction in Japan.

The two episodes neatly illustrate the gulf between American and Asian notions of crime and punishment — a disparity with evident diplomatic implications as Washington debates the future of China's trade status and its relations with Asia in general.

Michael Fay, an 18-year-old from Ohio, confessed to spray-painting graffiti on cars and other juvenile mischief. His sentence of six lashes with a rattan cane has unleashed a storm of protest from American government officials, editorial writers and the American public.

Such canings are administered with maximum force on the bare buttocks by a martial arts expert using a moistened bamboo rod 4ft long and one half-inch thick.

The drastic punishment usually leaves permanent scars, causing acute pain and severe trauma. Mr Fay's parents and lawyer have warned that he is emotionally immature and that he could become suicidal if the caning goes ahead.

Amnesty International described the punishment, handed down by the aptly-named Judge F. G. Remedios, as "cruel, inhuman and degrading". President Clinton has issued a strong protest to the government of Singapore calling the penalty "extreme", while diplomats have warned that relations between America and one of its main trading partners could be seriously damaged if the sentence is carried out.

The response of the American public, expressed in a deluge of letters to newspapers and magazines, is still more indignant. "I am appalled at the thought of... an American citizen being flogged in Singapore for spray-painting and throwing eggs at cars," wrote Eric Silverman to *The New York Post*.

Mr Silverman suggested that the American military should take over handling the case from the State Department: "Having carrier-based aircraft engage in threatening manoeuvres just outside Singapore airspace should send the island country our message."

Certainly Singaporean government officials appear baffled that America, with its soaring crime statistics, should feel justified in criticising a rigorous justice system

age: our ability to inflict punishment to protect our people goes well beyond a rattan cane."

More temperate, but no less passionate voices have described the incident as a reflection of paranoia on the part of "Asian society that demands conformity and rigid public order". In the *Washington Post*, columnist Jim Hoagland wrote: "Fay's harsh sentence is in part a knee-jerk reflex by a Chinese minority that sees itself as dependent on a culturally and intellectually inferior Western society."

That has kept the country, in the words of Singapore's Minister for Home Affairs, "orderly and relatively crime-free". "We do not have a situation where acts of vandalism are commonplace," he added, "as in cities like New York, where even police cars are not spared the acts of vandals."

The same bafflement over America's lack of social control has been expressed in the wake of the latest murder of Japanese citizens in America. The word "car-jacking" has no equivalent in Japan, where commentators wondered whether America had now lost the ability to distinguish between the value of a life and the worth of a motor vehicle.

As Washington struggles to establish a coherent policy towards China, linking the continuation of China's favoured trade status to progress on human rights, some Asian commentators have begun to question whether America has any moral mandate to set terms of behaviour when American law and order are in a such a parlous state.

"It is excellent that the US raises human rights issues in its diplomacy... but the most important human right is not to be killed," remarked Japanese television commentator, Chikushi Teitsuya, this week.



Michael Fay, right — America is furious over his sentence

Reactions to Michael Fay's draconian sentence for a crime which most urban Americans regard as an indefensible feature of urban life, reflect a wider and increasingly tense culture

clash between America and Asia. Newspapers here have been filled with condemnations of Singapore's tough legal and social codes, pointing out that even long hair and chewing gum are deemed unacceptable and failure to flush the toilet is a punishable offence.


The chorus of reproach surrounding the Fay sentence, which will be appealed this week, also manifests, in one way, the new level of uncertainty in American attitudes towards Asia. Once America felt few qualms about offering Asia its moral vision as a norm of international behaviour.

But the voice of American authority is now quavering a little, so when an easily identifiable victim of Asian brutality emerges, such as Michael Fay, the chorus of condemnation is suddenly deafening and, arguably, out of all proportion to the significance of the case.

It is hard to give a homily on respect for the sanctity of human life when innocent visitors to America are gunned down as an almost daily occurrence, to be briefly noted and mourned by the American press, and then forgotten.

Patience at few pite

Breeding



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Hatfield



Faster meningitis action needed by GPs... Delhi belly cure in sight... adult curse of a cramped lifestyle in childhood



**HARRY** Lauder's song about the worthy GP, Dr MacGregor, and his wee black bag was a hit tune in the Thirties and Forties, and was reputed to be a particular favourite with George VI and the Queen Mother.

The black bag is to the doctor what the mace is to the Speaker, a symbol of authority. However, whereas the mace is hollow, cumbersome and would make a poor weapon of defence, the contents of the black bag are thought out with care, and include (as well as simple diagnostic instruments) remedies for most general practice medical emergencies.

Last month Dr Kenneth Calman, the Chief Medical Officer, reminded doctors that all GPs should always carry injectable benzyl penicillin in their black bags, and that at the first suspicion of meningitis it should be used.

Delaying treatment until admission to the local hospital so the provisional diagnosis could be confirmed before treatment was started could, and all too often did,

## Inside every black bag



**MEDICAL BRIEFING**  
Dr Thomas Stuttard

cost the life of a patient, even if the hospital were only a matter of minutes away. Nor are hospitals infallible: time, too, is often lost there while senior colleagues are summoned and tests instituted.

*Monitor Weekly*, a widely read magazine for GPs, has carried out a survey among doctors to evaluate the effect of Dr Calman's advice: advice based on sound research which suggests that there would be a 40 per cent reduction in the death rate from bacterial meningitis if it were followed, and penicillin was given

by injection before hospital admission.

*Monitor's* survey showed that 11 per cent of doctors did not have benzyl penicillin readily to hand in their black bags, and in some cases not in the surgery either. Even if the doctors had the penicillin, or an equivalent antibiotic with them, only 43 per cent said that they would always take Dr Calman's advice to start treatment in the home.

A study by Dr Jeffrie Strang, consultant in public health medicine in North Yorkshire, showed that in 1992, of 13 patients given penicillin by injection at home,

none died, but among the 33 who had to wait to reach hospital before treatment was started there were eight deaths.

Last year bacterial meningitis, not to be confused with viral meningitis, affected 1,455 patients. Dr Dick Mayon-White, a consultant in communicable diseases in Oxfordshire, said that judging from figures in his area the number of cases has doubled in the past ten years, but there had been previous peaks before, notably in both wars and in the early 1970s.

The death rate is only likely to fall when the level of awareness of meningitis as a diagnosis increases among patients, or their parents, and their doctors. Once doctors' suspicions are aroused by a patient's unexplained fever (particularly when accompanied by a rash, even if it is not of the bruised purpuric type), irritability, dislike of light, neck stiffness (even with retraction), vomiting or a changing level of consciousness, they must not feel that their duty has been done when an ambulance has been summoned. Rather, they must realise that their first task must be to open their black bag.

take out the benzyl penicillin, and give the patient an immediate jab, preferably intravenously. Those allergic to penicillin can be treated with chloramphenicol.

## Funny tummy



**BARONESS**

Thatcher is not the only politician to be troubled with a tummy upset when travelling in the developing world.

Twenty years ago, it was estimated that a third of any parliamentary delegation to these countries would at any one time be confined to their rooms with travellers' diarrhoea, usually an infection with an uncommon strain of *E. coli*. Prophylactic antimicrobials, then in the form of Septrin, dramatically reduced the number of casualties.

If only Lady Thatcher's trip had been delayed until after the recent meeting of the British Gastroenterology Society all might have been well. At its recent meeting,

there was a report on the use of the antibiotic ciprofloxacin in the treatment of travellers' diarrhoea in British troops in Belize. If 500 milligrams of ciprofloxacin was given at the first sign of trouble, the severity and duration of the attack was halved.

It is now suggested that despite any anxiety about encouraging resistant strains of the bacteria, the same dose given before a short-term visit, when an attack of Delhi belly might be medically or professionally disastrous, could be justified.

## High anxiety



THE name of the bacteria *Helicobacter pylori* may not be either easy to remember or to pronounce even though it has often been in the

medical headlines for the past three or four years. When present in the stomach and upper intestinal tract, the bacteria has been shown to predispose patients to duodenal and gastric inflamma-

tion, ulceration, and possibly in later life, sometimes even cancer of the stomach.

The infection can start in childhood. It is more common in those who, when children, lived in overcrowded conditions — particularly if they have had to share a bed with brothers or sisters. When they have grown up, they have to suffer not only from the miseries of chronic indigestion but from the social embarrassment of being smaller in adult life than their contemporaries. Adult men who harbour *H. pylori* are on average 1.8cm and women 1cm shorter than those who have a cast-iron digestion and are *H. pylori* negative.

A recent study of girls in Edinburgh showed that being infected with the bacteria between the ages of seven and 11 had an appreciable effect on height at the time of sexual maturity.

Treatment to eradicate *H. pylori* has previously been protracted and unpleasant but recently doctors from Leeds have shown that a more palatable shorter regime of one week of omeprazole, clarithromycin and tinidazole is more effective and better tolerated.

## Patients at fever pitch

Doctors rarely get out a thermometer these days. Dr James Le Fanu explains why our temperature remains a puzzle

Every year millions of people, when feeling a bit off colour, stick a thermometer in their mouth, notice the column of mercury slip past the red arrow, and conclude they can spend the rest of the day in bed with an easy conscience.

But it seems that the obsessive German doctor Karl Reinhold August Wunderlich, who, in 1868, decreed 98.6°F (or 37°C) to be the upper limit of normal temperature, was wrong.

Dr Philip Mackowiak of the University of Colorado School of Medicine, while giving credit to Dr Wunderlich for his achievement in analysing a million temperature readings from more than 25,000 people, reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* at the end of last year that the latest in technological thermometry has shown the "normal" temperature to be higher than previously thought — and to vary throughout the day. In the morning it is 98.9°F (37.2°C), and in the evening 99.9°F (37.7°C).

Dr Mackowiak's discovery is unlikely to have a significant impact on medical practice, as few doctors nowadays bother to take a patient's temperature. Even the time-hallowed hospital routine of temperature measurements is thought to be a waste of time, except in surgical patients where a rise in temperature can give early warning of a post-operative infection.

In the past it was very different. From the time of Hippocrates up to as recently as 30 years ago, fever had two crucial medical functions. First, its pattern provided vital

diagnostic clues. Hippocrates' writings are full of precise descriptions of febrile illnesses, distinguishing between what we now know to be the different types of malaria according to whether the temperature peaked every day or only on the third or fourth day.

He also noted that "the worst, most protracted diseases were associated with continuous fever", and went on to describe the step-like rise in body temperature typical of typhoid fever. "They begin mildly but each paroxysm carries the disease a stage further. The extremities are chilled and can be warmed only with difficulty... insomnia is followed by coma and death."

Hippocrates had no recourse to a thermometer, making his acute distinctions of the different patterns of fever even more remarkable. His observations were extensively elaborated on by physicians at the turn of the century, who distinguished between the intermittent fever of an abscess, the sustained fever of typhoid and pneumonia, the remittent fever of malaria, and relapsing fever in patients with lymphoma.

Intriguing as these differences might be, their clinical usefulness was rapidly supplanted by the bacteriological techniques which could rapidly identify the specific organisms responsible. Second, fever was obviously beneficial — or, as the 17th-century physician Tommy Sydenham put it: "Fever is a mighty engine which Nature brings into the world for the conquest of her enemies." Like so many doctors before him, Syden-



A traditional sight — but even the time-hallowed hospital routine of regular temperature measurements is now thought to be a waste of time for most patients

ham was struck by how his patients would recover only once their illness had passed through a crisis phase of feverish sweats and delirium.

Indeed, the deliberate induction of a temperature, known as fever therapy, became a standard and effective treatment for infectious illnesses, particularly syphilis and gonorrhoea. The patient would be placed in a hot bath, or wrapped in an electric blanket, or placed in a cabinet heated with infra-red lamps until the temperature climbed to 41°C. Julius Wagner-Jauregg took the idea a stage

further by deliberately injecting malarial parasites into victims of neurosyphilis. The numbers who benefited with a full remission were almost balanced by those dying from this drastic treatment, but this did not stop him receiving the Nobel Prize for medicine in 1927.

Antibiotics killed off fever therapy just as rapidly as bacteriology killed off any interest in fever as a diagnostic aid. It is not surprising, then, that doctors have lost interest in taking their patients' temperatures. And if they do produce a thermometer from the bag, it is really only to show that they are

taking an interest, rather than in the hope of gleaming any useful information.

Ten years ago an American paediatrician, Barton Schmitt, coined the term fever phobia to describe the unnecessary alarm experienced by parents who wrongly believe that the higher the temperature, the more serious the illness. Rather, he argued, the ritual of sticking a thermometer in a sick child's mouth every four hours only induced parental anxiety and was best avoided. The more pragmatic

modern advice would be that if the brow feels feverish, then a dose of paracetamol is called for to bring down the temperature. The thermometer can be thrown away.

This in turn points to the essential enigma of fever. If it really does play a vital role as part of the body's defence mechanism against infection, then lowering the temperature with, for example, aspirin or paracetamol should have obvious adverse effects. But none has ever been demonstrated, and indeed the high demands placed on the body by running a temperature — the increase in metabolic rate, dehy-

dration from excessive sweating and so on — would seem to threaten the chances of survival, especially in the pre-antibiotic era.

Fever therapy may have helped some conditions, but most microbes that evoke high fevers (such as the malarial parasite) are clearly unaffected by a rise in temperature.

In the classic textbook on fever (1948) the physiologist E.F. Dubois provides the last word on this uncertainty. "Finally we are faced with the question as to whether or not fever in disease is beneficial. The literature on the subject is extensive... but inconclusive."

## Breeding a herd of pigs whose heart is big

The first organ transplant from pigs to humans is only three years away

The old line about the only useless part of the pig being the squeak has never seemed truer.

Within three years, if the optimism expressed by British scientists this week is justified, patients in need of transplant organs such as hearts, lungs and kidneys could be getting them from genetically-modified pigs.

The potential market is very large. Each year between 2,500 and 3,000 hearts are transplanted worldwide, but the demand is probably about ten times greater.

The possibilities are not lost on venture capitalists and drug companies. The Cambridge company Imutran, which is responsible for the British work, is financed by a New York company, Warburg Pincus, and a Swiss pharmaceutical house, Sandoz.

The task they face is to outwit the body's first line of defence — the activation of "complement", the factors in the blood that round on intruders and kill them. An unmodified pig's heart transplanted into a human patient will turn black and die in a few minutes as complement attacks it.

Our own cells are protected against attack by the presence of down-regulating proteins — essentially, off-switches — on the cell surface. By giving pigs the human versions of these switches, the Cambridge scientists hope to give the transplanted organs the same ability to turn off complement as human organs would have. Animal organ transplants are not new. The first attempt



The second generation of piglets carrying human genes

was made in 1905, when a French surgeon removed a pig's kidney and sewed it into a patient dying of renal failure. The attempt was a complete failure. In 1910 a German surgeon tried the

same operation using a monkey as the donor, and the patient survived for 30 hours. Better results can be had by choosing a donor species which has as much as possible in common with humans.

This select group includes chimpanzees, gorillas and baboons; but the first two are endangered species, and the idea of breeding baboons specifically for harvesting organs strikes many people as being barely acceptable.

Various methods have been tried to defeat rejection, including immunosuppressive drugs, filtering out the antibodies from the recipient animal's bloodstream so that there are none left to recognise the foreign cells, pre-treating recipients with cobra venom designed to exhaust the immune response, and even injecting recipients with antibodies against their own antibodies.

The approach taken by Imutran involves injecting the

human genes for the proteins into pig embryos, and hoping that in at least some cases they will be taken up and expressed. The second generation of piglets carrying these genes has now been born, and a third generation will now be bred, in order to produce pigs in which the genes are present in both pairs of the relevant chromosome. From this line of pigs, herds thousands strong will be raised and used for harvesting the organs.

The British Union against Vivisection has denounced the work, declaring that there is no evidence that transplanting pig's hearts into humans will actually save lives. True, the first operation is at least three years off, but there seems no reason in principle why it should not work.

NIGEL HAWKES

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Janet Daley



Hopes of a mature all-news radio station have been dashed by the patronising rubbish of Radio Yob

I feel rather responsible for Radio 5 Live. As you may recall, I launched a small journalistic nuclear device on this page last year, by insisting that the BBC was right to plough ahead with its plans for a 24-hour news network. But its first few days have confirmed my worst fears: a cross between Radio Bloke and Radio Yokel. Having been given a chance to do a bit more of what it does best, the BBC has chosen instead to do a lot more of what it does worst. What I had in mind was what the BBC originally had in mind — an extension of "Scud FM", which materialised during the Gulf War and became an instant hit.

By filling in the gaps between Radio 4's flagship news programmes with analysis and commentary in its usual intelligent and thoughtful style, the BBC had stumbled on a formula for an all-news station which suited it perfectly. War brings out the best in this country, and Scud FM leapt into existence before anyone could think of a reason for preventing it. When peace came, the nation subsided into its usual cynical torpor, and the resourceful spontaneity expired.

The BBC imagines that to reach mass audiences it must go slumming

Continuing with a news service then became a proposal to be filtered through a Byzantine hierarchy of BBC management committees. The cardigan and crossword brigade who constitute the self-appointed defenders of the status quo whatever that happens to be at the time — buried the Corporation in an avalanche of furious letters. BBC Radio lost its nerve and its better judgment under this onslaught and reaffirmed its commitment to simultaneous broadcasting of identical programmes on both Radio 4 and 5.

Since it could not now make use of the finest news and current affairs programmes in the broadcasting world — *Today*, *The World at One*, *PM* and *The World Tonight*, 24-hour news had to be completely reconstructed. And what was the new packaging that the Corporation chose? In the great tradition of the bureaucratic balls-up, it went for the very thing it has never been good at.

Officially described as youth-oriented and accessible, Radio 5 Live has all the toe-curling mock-matiness that Radio 1 once had: like an elderly aunt trying to sound "with it". With the unashamed condescension of the true snob, it assumes that the way to communicate with the masses is to go slumming.

On its first day, 5 Live carried a "funny" item about the Bible being translated into Yorkshire dialect, which plumbed the depths of Andy Capp stereo-

type. ("Does Jesus wear a cloth cap?") Working-class men were catered for by stories which middle-class people assumed would appeal to them, such as the prospect of betting shops being replaced by computers. And most of this was presented with the forced chattiness of highly educated people trying to sound common.

Could there be a more patronising notion than "accessibility"? What it means is: you would not understand me if I spoke in my usual way, so I will talk down to you. What the BBC has always failed to understand is that there are not just two registers, arcane dictioneism on the one hand and "Watcha-mat!" loutishness on the other. Exactly the same mistake is made in arts programming, which consists either of a closed circle of insufferable snots talking to and for each other or of anarchic forays into puerile pop culture. Only commercial radio occasionally grasps the notion that you can talk to ordinary people as if they were pretty much like yourself without the special-

ist knowledge. And saddest of all, this whole project may be misconceived. A survey out this week claims that the youth market for news is small. More than half of those who watch no television news at all are under 25. Most of those who watch the whole of the news are over 50. The young are much more likely than their elders to watch the headlines and nothing more.

These figures are not especially surprising. The young are notoriously consumed by their own identity problems and personal relationships. The supposed idealism of youth has really more to do with peer-bonding than with political ideology. Only with the stability of middle-age do most people become fully concerned with the world at large.

And who is the young listener that public service broadcasting seems determined to attract? To judge by Radio 5 Live and by its obsessively yobbish "yout" TV programming, the BBC has decided that all young people are working-class, or at least that working-class culture has swept the board among people under 30. This urban myth happens to fit neatly into the Corporation's class-dominated view of how to market programmes. At one point on Monday, I heard John Inverdale say, "Join the club, mate!" — which is really what this is all about. The BBC has reinforced a conception of Britain — as a collection of clubs whose membership is determined by class — which it might have helped to dismantle.



So it's Heseltine, then

Adamant determination followed by abject defeat has been the pattern of Major's rule — and it cannot go on

Every school child used to be taught the story of the young King Arthur and his famous sword Excalibur; I am sure it has been omitted, along with most of our other national stories, from the new curriculum. The magician Merlin had planted the sword in a block of stone; it was inscribed with a motto which said "Whoever pulls this sword from the stone is the rightful King of Britain". Many famous knights of great strength tried to do so but failed. Along came the young Arthur, rather like the young David in the Bible. He was able to pull the sword out of the stone like a knife out of butter. That is a myth which tells a truth about leadership: anyone who aims to be a leader in the true sense must be able to meet the magic challenge, if he or she cannot do it, he is not the true leader.

John Major has been tugging in vain to get the sword out of the stone for more than three years. If winning an election were proof of leadership, he would have dislodged it. That, unfortunately, cannot be the test. Many ineffective Prime Ministers, including Baldwin and Eden, won elections (Harold Wilson won four of them), and some great Prime Ministers, including Disraeli, Gladstone and Churchill, have lost them. The test is essentially one of command, of command over people and command over events.

One could put a series of rhetorical questions — Does John Major command the confidence of the country, and so on. That would only be rhetoric. To common observation, he does not command the confidence of the country at large, of the Conservative Party in the constituencies, of the Conservative Party in Parliament, of the members of his Government, or even of a united Cabinet. That is the situation which we, and he, must face, after he has been more than three years in office. Only two Prime Ministers that I can recall have inspired so little confidence: Eden after Suez in 1956 and Wilson after devaluation in 1967. On neither occasion did the withdrawal of confidence seem so absolute, or last so long.

This all sounds unkind, but it is right to face the truth. If the nation and his own colleagues have lost confidence in the Prime Minister, the situation is too damaging to the welfare of the country to pretend that things are otherwise. This loss of confidence seems to have three roots.

The first is the general public hostility to the governments of the West for their inability to meet the problems of the 1990s. The second is John Major's apparently recessive personality, his lack of confidence in himself. The third is his repeated inability either to foresee or to master public events.

John Major can indeed point to disasters which have overwhelmed governments in other leading countries. When he became Prime Minister in 1990, the Christian Democrats were in power in Italy; they received just 11 per cent of the votes in last weekend's election, after changing their name. The Progressive Conservatives were in power in Canada; they won just two seats at the last Canadian election. The Socialists were in power in France; they suffered the worst defeat of the century, following which the Prime Minister retired and committed suicide. The Republicans are no longer in the White House, and the Japanese ruling party lost power after 40 years in office. So Mr Major can say that even if he is very unpopular, he is not alone in that.

Yet this cuts both ways. If ruling parties have actually been destroyed in Italy and Canada, and very nearly so in France, the British Conservatives may well feel that they will be fighting for survival over the next three years. Even now the Conservatives are only precariously in second place in the opinion polls, and they have been running third in local government by-elections. After the borough and European elections, and after Eastleigh, the Liberal threat may seem even more menacing. Can the Conservatives afford to be led by someone who depresses most of their own supporters?

The second cause is John Major's own temperament. He does not give the impression that his inner man believes he is up to the job. One must be careful about this. Clement Attlee was a colourless personality but a decisive Prime Minister. Last week,

on a flight to Spain, I was reading Alan Bullock's excellent *Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives*, and was struck by this paragraph: "Stalin's relations with the other Social Democratic leaders... show how much he resented the social and intellectual disadvantage which he felt, how rarely he forgot a slight or forgave their condescension. But he also learned how to turn this undervaluation of himself to his advantage. When Trotsky dismissed him as 'a grey and colourless mediocrity', it was Stalin who profited from the other's mistake. Trotsky who paid for it — with the loss of the succession to Lenin, and eventually assassination." Despite the best efforts of Norman Fowler, I do not think John Major is a Stalin, any more than I think that I

am in the position of Trotsky. The trouble is that his uncertainty of manner overlays an equal uncertainty of action. Leadership depends on carrying out one's intuition. What he says he will do, a true leader must accomplish. That was so with Winston Churchill or Margaret Thatcher or President de Gaulle. It is true also of the monstrous leaders, of Hitler or Stalin himself. The one thing a leader cannot afford is to announce an irrevocable purpose and then immediately revoke it.

Yet this has been not just an occasional occurrence, but the most memorable characteristic of John Major's administration. He took us into the exchange-rate mechanism and said it would be a national betrayal to leave it; he left it. He promised us lower taxes; he raised taxes. He persuaded Norman Lamont to remain as Chancellor; he fired him. Maastricht was supposed to take Britain into the heart of Europe; where else may be, it is certainly not there. Last week he attacked John Smith as a poodle for being willing to accept a blocking majority of 27; this week he has accepted it himself. Who is the poodle now?

The leader must have enough

William Rees-Mogg

intellectual imagination to judge what the next weeks — or next years — situation is likely to be. There is no substitute for the thoughtful exploration of future possibilities. The leader must also have the will to carry through commitments once they have been made. In the case of the European majority, John Major should either have foreseen that he would not have the strength to carry the day or have fought the issue to the limit. What he actually did was absurd. Yet he has behaved in the same way repeatedly in the past. One blunder, one undignified retreat, could be forgiven. A habit of drawing lines in the sand and then running away from them destroys confidence and demands Britain.

If John Major goes now, or even before the turn of the year, he will probably be succeeded by Michael Heseltine. Six months ago it might have been Kenneth Clarke, but not now. In five years' time it might be Michael Portillo, but not yet.

Michael Heseltine's great virtue is that he would give the Tories a new start, and therefore a further chance. He has political strengths which match John Major's weaknesses. He is the most colourful figure on the front bench, and the best speaker. He is decisive — perhaps to a fault, but it is a fault on the right side. Margaret Thatcher may not have forgiven him for bringing her down, but the Thatcherites have, in terms of temperament, of the fire of determination, he seems more like her than anyone else on the front bench. He also knows from experience the arts of political opposition. John Major has never sat on the Opposition benches, and does not know how to exploit the weaknesses of the Labour and Liberal parties. Even on European questions, Michael Heseltine might well fight for Britain's interests more successfully and more ruthlessly. Michael Heseltine's leadership would not at all guarantee a Conservative recovery, but it would make it conceivable.

The obvious does not always happen, in politics or life. A permanent IRA ceasefire would certainly enhance John Major's reputation. Yet the Conservatives are now close to a decision. The local elections, the European elections, Eastleigh and the Scott report are all going to detonate in the coming months. Even if he will not face reality now, it seems unlikely that John Major will survive them.

Italy falls for a fairy-tale

Berlusconi wooed us, says Beppe Severgnini

Imagine a media magnate in Downing Street. He has become Prime Minister but he still owns a raft of daily and Sunday newspapers; he also happens to own the whole of TTV and Channel 4, the local equivalents of *The Economist*, *The Spectator*, *Hell* magazine and Spurs football club. Imagine Silvio Berlusconi, the Italian businessman-turned-politician. The only difference between the imaginary Englishman and the real-life Italian is that AC Milan, the football team he owns, is so much better than poor old Spurs. Berlusconi is likely to be the next Italian Prime Minister — his brand-new party, *Forza Italia* ("Go for it, Italy"), has come top in the general election — and he owns a large slice of the country's media.

I do not wish to demonise him. During the campaign, the clumsy Italian left did just that, with a bad conscience and disastrous consequences. I for one want to give Signor Berlusconi the benefit of the doubt. For 12 years I worked for *Il Giornale*, the quality newspaper belonging to his family, and found him an excellent proprietor. But things turned sour as soon as he entered politics. Together with 50 colleagues, I resigned, as I had no intention of working for a party broadsheet. We launched a new national paper, *La Voce*, which began publication last week and — let me boast a bit — it's doing wonderfully.

I am convinced that Signor Berlusconi will soon realise that his position is untenable. Every decision he takes will look suspicious (even when it will be taken in the best interests of the country). Every appointment he makes will be questioned. As well as being a Prime Minister in the bad old Italian tradition, he will have considerable influence over the three channels of RAI, the Italian state television network, which is the last stronghold of the beleaguered left. A Prime Minister controlling six television networks — both state and commercial — is, I daresay, a bit much even for Italy.

You may ask: why then have Italians chosen him? How did a man with so many potentially conflicting interests and so little political experience manage to convince the most cynical nation on earth that he is the man of the future?

There are several answers. First of all, he presented himself as the only alternative to the left, and Italians hate to be ruled by the left. Secondly, his television stations, his newspapers and his magazines (with a few exceptions) waged a relentless campaign for him, with actresses and quiz show presenters declaring their faith in his leadership. Although he has been around a long time as a businessman (with well established political connections), as a politician he was new. Next to him, everybody else seemed stale.

Businessmen have tried this trick before in several countries, most of them less sophisticated than Italy. There was of course Ross Perot, but his influence in America could not compare to Berlusconi's in Italy. There was Stanislaw Tyminski in Poland, who thought he could impress his countrymen when they had just escaped communism, by flaunting a little Canadian-earned wealth. More recently there was Chung Yu Jung, Hyundai's boss, in Korea. But they all failed. So why did Signor Berlusconi succeed?

I have a theory. I believe Signor Berlusconi is an extraordinarily smooth operator, a great organiser and a charming man. He seduced his country. Think of Italy as a young lady. She has been battered, day after day, for years by her brutish husband. Then along comes a handsome young man, all smiles and charm, bringing flowers and promising a good life. She is bound to succumb. Never mind that his ties are a bit tacky, he drives a car that is a bit too flashy and has had scores of other women before. He offers her the hope of the *dolce vita* knight in a fairy-tale.

This is what happened in Italy. The apparent calm with which we reacted to two years of appalling scandals (with more than 7,000 people under investigation, including 438 MPs) was actually sheer shock. Silvio Berlusconi realised this. He may have entered politics to prevent a left-wing government, but he very soon started to enjoy it. "I am tired of being Silvio Berlusconi," he told a friend.

Italy is like a wounded person lying by the side of the road," he told us when he came to *Il Giornale* to ask for our support. "I cannot drive past, and pretend I haven't noticed." From that moment, with the powerful help of his own media, he began to grow. He sold his media Thatcherite message with American marketing skills: he employed an army of pollsters; he gave supporters badges; he wore a cardigan instead of the usual double-breasted suit when giving TV interviews; he recruited professionals to choose the right soothing colours for a conference stage, a background, a neck-tie. Intellectuals laughed, and dismissed him. Eighteen million Italians fell in love. As you would with young lovers, please wish them luck. They need it.

The author is a columnist for *La Voce*.

Shuffling to power

AS the Heseltine machine moves smoothly into third gear, the Westminster rumour-mill is already running at full tilt. For along the corridors of parliamentary power, talk is of only one thing — who will serve in the Heseltine Cabinet?

Opinion is certainly divided. "Watch him; he'll appease the right," say some. "Watch him; he'll appease the left," say others.

But whichever way the Tories' ultimate crowd-pleaser jumps, one of the first questions he will have to address is what to do with a politician whose *curriculum vitae* begins: "Age 51. Last position: Prime Minister." For John Major is hardly elder statesman material, and unless Heseltine wants to split the party completely, he might feel obliged to offer his predecessor the only post worthy of a former Prime Minister: Foreign Secretary.

Admittedly, Major's previous three-month spell at the FO was not the happiest of times, thanks to Margaret Thatcher's dominance over foreign policy. "But what a wonderful chance to wreak vengeance on all those public-school mandarins," argues one Westminster watcher. To appease the right, Heseltine

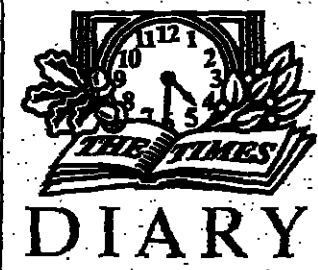
must at least be seen to have offered senior jobs to the likes of Michael Howard and Michael Portillo — as Chancellor and President of the Board of Trade perhaps. Whether Howard would ever agree to serve under Heseltine is another question.

Looking after the left looks rather easier. His rival for the top, Kenneth Clarke, looks increasingly like a man in need of rescue from the mathematical machinations of No 11. A move back to the Home Office, a position he is known to have enjoyed, might well be a very acceptable consolation prize.

Choc-a-bloc

EASTER preparations are well under way at Michel Roux's Waterside Inn on the Thames at Bray. A fearsome-looking chocolate bunny nearly a metre tall has popped up in the restaurant.

"It is a sculpture, and it looks as if it might strike you," says Roux, who explains that it is a testimony to his love of chocolate. "Chocolate is so smooth and silky, and it's warm when you melt it. It's sensual," he says. Such is his addiction that he has devoted a chapter to



chocolate in his forthcoming book, *My Passion for Desserts*. And his message to fellow chocolate lovers? "If you eat the best, you must not be a pig. Use but do not abuse."

Silent airwaves

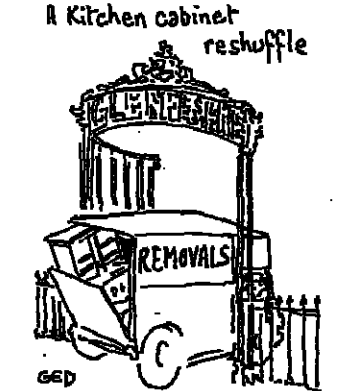
MICHAEL HESELTINE was not slow in coming forward yesterday to defend the Government's position on Europe on Radio 4's *Today* programme. Others, as John Humphrys pointed out on air, were very much more reticent.

"Heseltine agreed to go on the programme the evening before, but they were keen to get other ministers as well," says a broadcasting source. "They asked John Redwood and Michael Howard, but both said no." So, too, did a number of backbenchers who usually rush to the microphone given

the opportunity. "It was a problem to get anyone. It seemed as if everyone thought that if they went on air they would not be able to say anything positive about the Government."

Home on the range

CHARLES SMALLBONE, he of the kitchen cabinets, may be renting out his notorious French villa, where the Duchess of York enjoyed poolside frolics with her financial adviser. But his former partner in the Smallbone kitchen business, John Dibben, is about to advertise something rather larger: he plans to sell his entire estate in Scotland. The 40,000-acre Glenleslie estate in the Cairngorms, formerly



the seat of the Lords Duivenfort, will be put up for sale by Dibben later this spring for some £4 million. Dibben appears to have appointed Brodies, the Edinburgh-based solicitor, to deal with the sale, but the firm was saying nothing yesterday.

Other agents were more forthcoming, however. "It's got nothing to do with toe-sucking," says one. "But much of the estate is a national nature reserve, so there are restrictions about what one can do with the land."

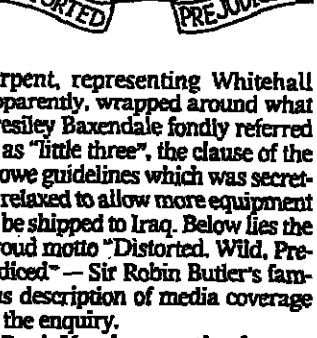
Lord Armstrong, the former Cabinet Secretary, is best known for having reluctantly admitted to the "Spycatcher" enquiry that he may have been "economical with the truth". Seven years on, there are modest signs of improvement. In a BBC2 documentary, *True Brits*, our man in Saudi Arabia, David Core-Booth, gives his version of the events at the heart of the Scott enquiry. They were, he said, "as close to being honourable as international circumstances allowed."

Enough neck

THE exhausted journalists who have faithfully reported the Scott enquiry for the past 11 months are not letting its conclusion pass

without a ceremony. For in the odd idle moment they have designed a veteran's tie, to be distributed to a very select band of survivors.

The Crimpeane and satin navy blue number (remember, these are journalists) has a motif showing a



serpent, representing Whitehall apparently wrapped around what Presley Baxendale fondly referred to as "little three", the clause of the Howe guidelines which was secretly relaxed to allow more equipment to be shipped to Iraq. Below lies the proud motto "Distorted, Wild, Prejudiced" — Sir Robin Butler's famous description of media coverage of the enquiry.

Paul Henderson, the former managing director of Matrix Churchill, is delighted that along with Scott, Butler and Baxendale, he will be one of the recipients of the tie. "It's wonderful — and about time someone made light of the whole affair. I usually wear silk, but I shall make an exception."





## THE BRITISH INQUISITION

The organisation of government investigations needs reform

In the ten months since the Scott enquiry began its hearings, concern has mounted over the inquisitorial methods used by the tribunal. Because the habits of the British adversarial system of justice are so deeply ingrained, the daily reports of a judge and a barrister firing questions at witnesses without formal counsel have stirred deep-rooted anxieties. In practice, the methods used by Lord Justice Scott have been perfectly appropriate to his specific task. Yet this is so only because he has exercised the discretion open to him in a wise fashion.

The fears which his enquiry has provoked should prompt general reflections upon the slow drift towards inquisitorial techniques in this country. The growing public desire for transparency in government decisions and commercial life has created a demand for swift and effective investigation of cases in the public and private sectors. But the discretion open to those conducting such enquiries remains extraordinary. A systematic appraisal of their procedures and powers based on first principles is overdue.

Official investigations into company affairs offer a useful case study of the problem. Ernest Saunders has already launched a petition at the European Court of Human Rights over his treatment in the Guinness tribunal. Last week the Al Fayed brothers claimed in Strasbourg that the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) investigation into their 1985 takeover of the House of Fraser breached Article Six of the European Convention on Human Rights. They argue that the manner in which the DTI investigation was carried out and its results published was unjust and damaged their reputation. In *The Times* this week, David Pannick, QC argued that their claim stands little chance. But he agreed that the State's powers of investigation and enquiry are in urgent need of reform.

The most obvious defect of such investigations is their arbitrariness. The guidelines given to company inspectors are minimal; they can rely on hearsay; the individuals they investigate have no right to see relevant material, the names of the witnesses testifying against them or the charges which might ultimately be made against them. Investigations are conducted in private, yet the Government retains the right to publish

their results — or not. For aggrieved individuals who have been so investigated, judicial review remains the only means of appeal against such executive decisions.

Enquiries of this kind, properly conducted, are a public good. Yet their credibility will be imperilled by a series of adverse judgments in Strasbourg. New procedural constraints are required to preserve their underlying purpose — to establish the truth — and to protect the rights of the individual.

Since the Salmon Commission's report on tribunals in 1966, there have been many calls for investigated individuals to have the right to cross-examine relevant witnesses. This would not be a helpful step. First, it would greatly slow down the work of such enquiries. Eight years after the event, the Guinness tribunal is still considering the facts. Since many investigated individuals complain that delay is the most damaging feature of such enquiries, it is hard to see how justice would be served by compounding it. Second, giving investigated individuals the right to cross-examine would formalise the least desirable aspects of Government investigations. It would give them the trappings of a court.

It is precisely this tendency that reform must discourage. As far as possible, enquiries which (in contrast to the Scott enquiry) may lead to prosecution should be investigative rather than determinative. They should establish facts for the relevant Secretary of State and make modest recommendations. They should not be an opportunity for vitriolic attacks or extravagant prose. Individuals under investigation ought to be informed if they are suspected of any criminal or civil wrongdoing and told the identity of relevant witnesses.

Within reason, they should also be given the right to reply to a report before it is submitted to the Government. Above all, ministers' power to publish or withhold the findings of enquiries as they see fit should be constrained by clear guidelines. But the first and most important step is that ministers recognise the need to address the problem systematically. Though Lord Justice Scott has performed admirably, his successors must be given a much more rigorous template.

## ROAD WORKS AHEAD

Signalling a serious change of government mind

John MacGregor's long-awaited review of the £23 billion roads programme sounds the retreat by a Conservative government from the populist postwar promise of cars for every family and clear roads to run them on. The Transport Secretary is now prepared to accept what traffic experts, environmentalists, rail lobbyists and, increasingly, ordinary voters have long insisted: Britain cannot build ever more roads without paying an unacceptable price in harm to cities, the countryside and the air.

The review, which began as a way of reducing the astonishing average delay of 13.5 years between the proposal for a road and its opening, broadened into a fundamental rethink of road-building. Mr MacGregor has sensibly recognised that there is not enough money for all the 470 projects on his department's wish list. He also recognises that some roads are more important than others: trunk routes that hasten exports to the coast, bypasses that divert lorries from ancient city centres, orbital routes that link vital arteries.

Astonishingly, the Department of Transport seems to have had no priority list before this: work was proceeding at the same pace on all schemes, prematurely blighting swaths of land where the first bulldozers were unlikely to move in for years. The review's priority list is bound to be politically contentious, as lobby groups for and against various schemes dispute the criteria. But few could argue against the new principle.

Altogether 49 schemes will be dropped, about 10 per cent of the total. Most fall on tougher environmental grounds. Some,

such as the M12, are clearly not worth the protests they will cause; but controversy and electoral popularity are hardly not the main criteria. Widening the M25 will rouse fury in the Conservative heartlands, but it is unavoidable if Mr MacGregor is to stick to his chosen option of channeling traffic along upgraded existing motorways and trunk routes instead of through secondary roads or on new roads laid across farming land.

The schemes to be dropped, however, are relatively costly, accounting for a seventh of estimated spending. Ostensibly the review has not been driven by cost-cutting: spending over the next three years is already fixed. But Mr MacGregor is disingenuous if he pretends that change has not in part been forced by spiralling costs: already he is softening public opinion for motorway tolls, electronic metering and pricing barriers to keep cars out of city centres.

The question unanswered by the review is whether the cuts of about \$3 billion in road building will be used to bolster public transport. There will be a political price to pay for greater congestion, limitations on private car use and the delay in starting new bypasses. People can be weaned from their cars only by efficient, modern and dependable buses, trains and light railways. The Government insists that it already spends 40 per cent of its budget on public transport while 90 per cent of all journeys are by road; but even more is needed to effect a change. The review is the first welcome step towards a policy not based on the supremacy of the private car, but the road ahead remains bumpy.

## FORTY-SIX ALL OUT

And still four more innings to face their nemesis

New habits die hard. Taking their cue from the John Major Ramblers, England capitulated yesterday at the Queen's Park Oval in Port of Spain. But at least they had an excuse. Unlike their counterparts in government, who faced nothing more hostile than the googlies of Jacques Delors' "French cricketers", Michael Atherton's troops had to contend with the most dangerous fast bowler on earth. And while Mr Major had to come to terms with a paltry 27, Mr Atherton needed 194, monumental in comparison.

England's nemesis is no ordinary creature. He is called, in the Baroque West Indian way, Curtly Elcom Lynwall Ambrose. There are few Johns or Pauls or Peters in Antigua — where only sumptuous names are favoured. He is 6ft 7in-tall, has legs longer than most English queues, and a right arm that hurls its brightly lacquered projectile as though from the stratosphere.

But — most dispiritingly — he never smiles. On Tuesday, he sucked England's batsmen up like some greedy, ferocious Hoover-on-legs. Privileged were those who watched him bowl: doomed were those who faced him. And across villages in every little crumb of land that flecks the Caribbean Sea — like Siparia, Dieppe Bay Town, Gouyave,

Port Esquivel, Boggy Peak and Bartica — mothers will soon give birth to boys called Curtly — perhaps even girls called Curtly. Atherton's men, meanwhile, must thank the great scorer in the sky for the smallest of mercies. Fred Trueman has not yet spoken on the subject. And they escaped by one run the ignominy of equalling England's lowest total in the history of Test cricket, although they did score England's lowest total in the 20th century.

In a match which, miraculously, they won, Arthur Shrewsbury's men scored 45 (but faced 28 more balls than Atherton's men) in 1887. That was the year *The Times*, to its embarrassment and at great cost, accused Charles Parnell, the leader of the Irish parliamentary group in the Commons, of complicity in the Phoenix Park murders. "Phoenix" is an appropriate metaphor. Will Atherton's men rise from the ashes of Trinidad? They are due to face Ambrose in four more innings — twice on the bouncy pitch at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, and twice on Ambrose's own pitch in Antigua — before they return to the banality of the county championship. They have a chance to redeem themselves, or four more opportunities to score below 45.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

### Fair compensation for the victims of violent crime

From Mr Robert MacLennan, MP for Caithness and Sutherland (Liberal Democrat)

Sir, The Home Secretary has been given the opportunity to rethink his proposals for the compensation of the victims of violent crime by the decision to allow judicial review proceedings to be brought against him by the TUC (report, March 23).

This is not altered by last night's government majority against Liberal Democrat and Labour amendments to the Criminal Justice Bill (report, March 29) which, had they been approved, could have sunk the proposals. The Home Secretary should immediately start a process of consultation.

The White Paper, "Compensating Victims of Violent Crime", published in December 1993, asserts that compensation from the public purse is provided because "the public feels a sense of responsibility for... the innocent victim".

The public, however, has not been consulted by the Government about the non-statutory scheme which it intended to introduce on April 1. That scheme proposed a tariff of compensation unrelated to the circumstances of particular victims.

In Northern Ireland, by contrast, where a scheme is already on a statutory footing, the Government has announced that it will consult the public about its future.

If that consultation is meaningful, it may well result in the continuance of a scheme to compensate victims of crime according to common law principles, which takes proper account of their individual circumstances, such as loss of earnings, age and occupation.

If the Government persists with the tariff scheme in Great Britain, the victim of an IRA bomb in Belfast might receive a fair award, whereas the same victim injured by an IRA bomb in Bootle could only look for a standard sum.

It is to be hoped that the Home Secretary will now take the opportunity, following consultation, of enacting a fair scheme of compensation for the victims of crime in Great Britain which reflects the principles of common law.

Yours sincerely,  
ROBERT MACLENNAN  
(Liberal Democrat spokesman on home affairs)  
House of Commons  
March 29.

From Professor Paul Wilkinson

Sir, I recently completed a research report on victims of terrorism in the UK, a study co-sponsored by the Abbey Neave Trust and TSB Foundation. May I add my voice to those in the Lords, the legal profession and the victim support organisations who are urging the Home Office to reconsider their proposed switch to a crude tariff system in arrangements for the victims of criminal injuries.

I submit that there are important issues of public interest involved in the decision to exclude consideration of the personal circumstances of the victim such as medical needs and expenses, loss of income, and the effect of the loss of the breadwinner on dependants.

The Government has argued that the victim will benefit from its proposed arrangements because payment will be much quicker, but processing of claims will inevitably be

delayed by the need for obtaining detailed police and medical reports. Treasury pressure for reductions in public expenditure was clearly the overriding reason for the Government's proposals, not efficiency.

The acute and often protracted needs of the victims of terrorism, the most brutal of all forms of criminal injury, exemplify the major weaknesses of the proposed tariff system: it is fundamentally inhumane and inequitable. It is a tragic fact that many of those who are seriously injured in terrorist bombings require expensive medical care for the rest of their lives.

Surely there is a moral obligation in any humane society to take these needs into account when assessing criminal injury compensation? And is there not an equally overwhelming case when a parent and breadwinner has been killed and the dependants are left without adequate means of support?

The tariff system will also be inequitable, because victims who qualified for the previous arrangements on the mainland were treated with generosity and compassion, and because victims in Northern Ireland will continue to be treated more generously, because they are covered by a separate system. Do we really want mainland victims to be treated as second-class citizens?

The proposed scheme is a tragic error. Let us hope that the Government will take urgent steps to rectify it.

Yours sincerely,  
PAUL WILKINSON  
University of St Andrews  
Department of International Relations  
St Andrews, Fife KY16 9AL  
March 29.

### Leasehold reform

From Mrs Joan South

Sir, Sir George Young (letter, March 17, other letters, March 29) may now wish to portray the alternative right of a lease extension that has been given to leaseholders of flats as a good rather than a bad thing. The Government took a very different view while the Bill was still in the Commons.

Mr Tony Baldry, speaking for the Government in the standing committee on November 24, 1992, expressed the Government's belief that such an alternative right would "undermine the entire concept of collective enfranchisement" (Hansard, col 221). It would create, he said,

a splendid avoidance mechanism for landlords who were anxious to retain their property. Such a landlord could encourage a few selected tenants to apply for new leases — perhaps with sweeteners — and, by operating the divide-and-rule principle in that way, would prevent collective enfranchisement from taking place.

If the amendment at that time were to be accepted, he suspected, "the people who would be really cheering in the streets would be the landlords".

Yours faithfully,  
JOAN SOUTH  
(Campaign Coordinator,  
Leasehold Enfranchisement  
Association)  
26 Upper Phillimore Gardens, W8.

### Taking precautions

From Mr Roger Linn

Sir, Your report (earlier editions, March 25) on the situation in Korea contains the following piece of information: "Residents (of Pyongyang) have been told to carry sacks containing explosives in time of war."

What can this possibly mean? Where are they to obtain these explosives? What are they to do with them? Would gas masks not be a more useful accessory?

Yours faithfully,  
ROGER LINN  
Mandarin House, 33 High Street,  
Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex.

### Hungarian democracy

From Mr Jacob Ecclestone

Sir, Dr Arpad Tarcsy (letter, March 19) says the decision to dismiss 129 staff from Hungarian Radio was justified, on the grounds of economic necessity or because they were Communists. Having recently spent several days investigating the dismissals with a team from the International Federation of Journalists, I hope you will allow me to make two points.

First, the acting director of Hungarian Radio, Mr Laszlo Csucs, told us that the journalists were dismissed for behaving in an "unethical and unprofessional manner", although he was unable to provide any evidence.

Second, we decided that the government did play a part in the sackings. They got rid of the previous director of the radio station in breach of the constitution of Hungary. They appointed Mr Csucs, who had no background in broadcasting. They put up the 105 million forints to pay the journalists off, and they condoned serious breaches of the Hungarian labour code.

Could this have anything to do with the fact that there is a general election in Hungary on May 8 and the government is deeply unpopular?

Our team recommended that all those dismissed by Hungarian Radio should be reinstated (apart from those of retirement age) and immediate steps be taken to draw up a code of practice to govern the coverage of the forthcoming election campaign.

### Impact of Britain's Euro policies

From the General Secretary of the GMB

Sir, The anti-European madness appears to be catching.

The Confederation of British Industry has now followed the Government's example and shot itself in the foot. By effectively pulling out of the talks on European works councils (report, March 30) it has given up its only opportunity of influencing the debate.

The 11 other governments of the European Union will now pass a directive to suit their own convenience. British-based international companies will have to put up with the results. Abandoned by the Government and sacrificed by the CBI, they will now have to find their own salvation.

Whatever the rhetoric, many multinational companies have already decided to set up Europe-wide consultation arrangements with their employees. After the CBI decision I expect that the trickle of agreements will quickly become a flood.

Yours sincerely,  
JOHN EDMONDS  
General Secretary, GMB,  
22-24 Worpole Road, SW19,  
March 30.

From Mr Richard O'Sullivan

Sir, Once again this Government has shown that when offered the choice between protecting the national interest or abandoning that interest it prefers to do the latter, almost immediately after having shown how it could do the former.

Yours sincerely,  
RICHARD O'SULLIVAN,  
Parkgate Farm,  
Little Clacton, Essex,  
March 30.

From Mr David Dunn

Sir, I disassociate myself from the remarks of Mr John Greenway, MP (letter, March 25): I would be happy to be part of a federal Europe, if it meant

that we would be governed competently and democratically from Brussels instead of incompetently and undemocratically from Westminster, as is the case at present.

Yours faithfully,  
DAVID DUNN,  
Brookfield, Forest Green,  
Dorking, Surrey,  
March 25.

From Mr Michael Brotherton

Sir, Speaking in the House of Commons on October 5, 1938, during the debate on the Munich agreement Winston Churchill said:

"I was demanded at the pistol's point. When it was given, I was demanded at the pistol's point. Finally the dictator consented to take £1 17s 6d and the rest in promises of good will for the future."

Similar words would apply with equal accuracy to the present Government and Prime Minister.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant.  
MICHAEL BROTHERTON,  
The Old Vicarage,  
Wantage, Oxfordshire,  
March 29.

From Mr C. H. P. Bellwood

Sir, Surely a permanent net contributor to the EU budget such as Britain should have a veto on all decisions by the Council of Ministers that involve expenditure of money?

Yours faithfully,  
CECIL BELLWOOD,  
Westfield House, Andrews Lane,  
Ropley, Hampshire,  
March 24.

From Mrs Jane Belding

Sir, Surely the solution once and for all for Europe is for the other member countries to kick the UK out?

Yours faithfully,  
J. BELDING,  
41 Cyril Street West,  
Taunton, Somerset,  
March 24.

out of a total 2,000 employees — the latter number far higher than in comparable services abroad.

Among the journalists dismissed on March 4 were indeed a handful whose violations of operational and ethical norms, modelled on those of the BBC, have been pointed out by the independent radio supervisory board. They had done their best to whip up sentiments against the management, and sent out, as on a number of previous occasions, one-sided information to various international contacts. Western colleagues heard the cries and thought they had to rally to "defend the profession", often little knowing what they were defending.

Since the dismissals the management of the radio have examined complaints from liberals and Socialists and found their claims unfounded. Subjective and biased reporting continues — in their favour. The radio management's official statement, issued on the day following the dismissals, together with the supportive comments which they received, were accorded four minutes and 49 seconds of air time; protests were accorded 27 minutes and 47 seconds on the hourly newscasts.

So much for an action which, says Mr Galliner, is "reminiscent of the suppression of the 1956 revolution".

Yours sincerely,  
TUNDE VAJDA  
(Press Attaché),  
Embassy of the Republic of Hungary,  
35 Eaton Place, SW1.

Letters for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. We regret that we cannot accept letters by telephone but they may be sent by fax to 071-782 5046.

### Freedom call for UK's post offices

From the General Secretary of the National Federation of Sub-Postmasters

Sir, It is clear from the report of the trade and industry select committee on the future of the Post Office (details, March 25; report, March 28) that the Government's dilemma in its instructions for the Post Office is one which is extremely difficult to overcome. While supporting the committee's recommendation that a conclusion is reached without delay, I must point out that this is not purely a matter of private, or not private.

In July 1992 Michael Heseltine gave an unequivocal commitment to the nationwide network of post offices. This commitment was reinforced by the Prime Minister at the Conservative Party conference when he dismissed the idea that people would be forced to use bank accounts to collect their pensions and benefits rather than post offices (report, October 9, 1993).

Those assurances are, of course, most welcome. But they mean nothing if the Government prevents Post Office Counters Ltd from competing for new business. The indications from Michael Heseltine, when he gave evidence to the select committee (report, February 4), suggested that a counters business in the public sector would not be granted the freedom to compete for business opportunities in the private sector.

Whatever is decided about privatisation, this federation, and its thousands of members running post offices throughout the UK, have no doubt that freedom from restrictions to compete is essential if the cherished network of post offices is to survive and meet the requirements of its customers into the next century.

Yours sincerely,  
COLIN BAKER,  
General Secretary,  
National Federation of  
Sub-Postmasters,  
22 Windlesham Gardens,  
Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex,  
March 28.

Business letters, page 29

### Radio changes

From Mr J. G. M. Stamp

Sir, It seems as though someone at the BBC is being deliberately perverse in tampering with the regular long-wave Radio 4 programmes. Over this last weekend the 6 o'clock news was blacked out for a cricket commentary, and the normal late-evening programme was disrupted in favour of the Open University. The missing regular features were broadcast on the very tiresome and unreliable VHF.

This is wholly inconsistent with the assurances given to the public last year. I hope that the BBC will deal harshly with those of its employees who seek to find small-print excuses to enable them to get their own way. Was not the new Radio 5 created to solve this dilemma?

Your obedient servant,  
J. G. M. STAMP,  
9 Manor Court,  
Grange Road, Cambridge,  
March 28.

From Mrs Jill Jones

Sir, Those of us who campaigned to keep Radio 4 on long wave, with all its variety and interest, have been short-changed. Radio 5 Live has now started — a specialist news and sports station — and what have they done to our long wave? Dumped *Test Match Special* on us after all.

I wonder if the BBC realised that TMS is so boring to most listeners that they wouldn't have a hope of getting Radio 5 Live off the ground if they put it there.

Yours sincerely,  
JILL JONES,  
20 Montpellier Row,  
Twickenham, Middlesex,  
March 29.

### Beating the car 'binge'

From Mr David N. Miller

Sir, Mr Atkinson (letter, March 25) makes a telling point on the financing of Rover and, as he called it, the "August car binge".

Surely, the solution is quite simple: as in other countries, the number-plates should be issued to the driver personally, who can transfer them, on subsequent vehicle sale and purchase, to the next vehicle.

The pressure to buy in August would thus be avoided — and incidentally would it not be easier for the police to trace the owner?

Yours faithfully,  
DAVID N. MILLER,  
25 Warwick Square, SW1,  
March 26.

### Ducking out

From Mr John McGregor

Sir, The time has come to act: compensate West Indies for the loss of revenue from the fourth and fifth Tests, shoot the manager and bring the rest of the party home.

Yours sincerely,  
J. MCGREGOR,  
174 Estate Road,  
Carmyle, Glasgow,  
March 30.







## OBITUARIES

## PETER NEWINGTON

Peter Newington, television producer and film-maker, died on March 17 aged 71. He was born on June 2, 1922.

THE death of the director Peter Newington removes from the scene an important figure in the history of postwar television. As a producer, he exerted the greatest influence at the end of the 1950s, when he was a leading member of the team which created the *Monitor* arts programme for BBC Television. As a freelance director, he spent the next three decades making films on a variety of subjects concerned with history and the arts. He had also blazed a trail as a teacher of his craft, serving in the 1960s as the first Professor of Film at the Royal College of Art. His fellow academics included Carol Weight and Ruskin Spear, both of whom he had filmed in *Panegyric Painters*, a memorable double portrait for *Monitor*.

Peter Derek Newington was the son of a Kent solicitor, growing up in country surroundings near Tunbridge Wells. His sympathies were equally drawn to art and theatre. He studied engraving at the local art school and, as a child actor, played the lead in an amateur production of Christopher Fry's *Boy with a Cart*. After five years in the RAF (he served latterly as an education flight sergeant) he went up to the Royal College of Art as an exhibitor in 1946.

A gifted draughtsman and painter, he eventually chose to specialise in theatre design, directing and designing a student *Peer Gynt* which is still fondly remembered. He greatly enjoyed acting and with his dark and saturnine good looks — his eyes often gleamed with an almost manic passion — he might well have had a successful stage career had he not preferred to develop the creative and didactic side of his nature.

He became a tutor at the renowned Old Vic Theatre School, where he fell under the spell of its legendary director, Michael St Denis. With his first wife, Daphne, whom he had met at the RCA, he then worked on sets and designs for *Dido and Aeneas*, mounted at the original Mermaid Theatre, which Bernard Miles built in the garden of his St John's Wood house. A subsequent spell of acting for the BBC's infant television service led in 1955 to an invitation from the



On the set of *Monitor*, 1958. From left, Edward Scott, Jack Ashley, Grace Wyndham Goldie, seated, Alan Tyrer, Huw Wheldon; standing, Peter Newington, Natasha Kroll, Terry Williams

Corporation to learn the craft of television production.

When Newington directed *Alice in Wonderland* for Children's Programmes, he served early notice (it was his first production) that he possessed both the directorial flair to create a mood of visual fantasy with limited resources and the leadership qualities needed to hold a creative team together. A lively magazine series called *Children's Caravan* followed and within three years Newington was taken on by the heavyweights, if quaintly-titled, Talks Department, to work alongside Huw Wheldon on the new arts magazine series, *Monitor*.

As *Monitor's* presenter and overall editor, Huw Wheldon commanded most of the public's attention but, behind the scenes, it was Newington who was largely responsible for the success of the series. The two men admired each other, swapped anecdotes with abandon, and complemented one another's talents.

While the mercurial Wheldon was given to Welsh hyperbole and appeared exhaustingly self-confident, Newington spoke quietly and self-deprecatingly. To colleagues he

would precede his often penetrating observations with a nervous laugh. Words were not his prime tool of expression and he proceeded towards his artistic goal by a series of intuitions rather than an articulated, premeditated grasp of structure. But his taste was infallible, largely because his knowledge of the visual arts and the theatre was based on first-hand experience.

An artist himself, his filmed studies of painters and sculptors such as Sidney Nolan and Elizabeth Fry set standards of insight and imagination which have not been bettered. Nolan subsequently wrote to say that he had never had such a rewarding experience with the media. Newington's own creativity lifted his films from the level of reportage to artistic statements in their own right. (It is the fashionable doctrine to suggest that pioneers of arts television, such as Newington, had an easier task than the directors on subsequent cultural shop windows — LWT's *South Bank Show* and BBC-2's *The Late Show* — because they were exploring what then was virgin territory. But Newington's vision was always individual and his work

defied fashionable trends: his talents were still in demand at the time of his death.)

In addition to his skills as a director, Newington brought to *Monitor* a commitment to education which was expressed both in his desire to share his own enthusiasms with the general public and to pass on to younger and less experienced director colleagues, such as Humphrey Burton and David Jones, his own high standards of programme-making. He was also a good judge of potential programme ideas, possessing what a senior colleague described as "a highly sensitive bullshit detector". He moved with equal ease in the company of poets such as Robert Graves and Ezra Pound and cartoonists as divergent as André François and Ronald Searle. He never made a dull film or a clumsy one.

*Monitor*, in retrospect, may seem like a golden era upon which one turned one's back at one's own peril, but when he was approaching his 40th birthday, Newington nevertheless felt impelled to move on from the magazine format and away from Wheldon's overwhelming presence. He resigned from the BBC and

became a freelance director. He made a notable documentary study of Graham Sutherland for ABC's *Tempo* series, and for the BBC a superb anti-war film called *The Picardy Affair*. The battle of Agincourt was reconstructed in a poetic *tour de force* involving only two actors, Esmond Knight and Robert Hardy.

A cinema film made on Piccadilly Island won him an award but no invitations to move into feature films — the career course which had been adopted a few years earlier with signal success by his *Monitor* colleague, John Schlesinger. Instead, Newington accepted Robin Darwin's invitation to return to his alma mater as the Royal College of Art's Professor of Film. It was not an entirely happy episode — he found he had exchanged one set of routines for another — and later in the 1960s he set up an independent company, Penbury Films (named after his childhood home) to make commercials. His business partner was his second wife Jean McDonald.

Never a man to hanker after the trappings of power or to indulge in showbiz "hype", Newington's television career dipped for a while but recovered in the late 1970s and 1980s, thanks to the patronage of Michael Gill, another BBC programme-maker who left the BBC to strike out independently. With Gill as his producer, he made a striking film about the Navajo Indians in Arizona. Another, about surrealism, was based on an art collection in Cleveland, Ohio. Retirement was not a word in his vocabulary. He had quite recently directed two films with the Mexican writer, Carlos Fuentes, and at the age of 71 he was about to work again with Gill in Spain when he was taken ill. His death in hospital, from septicaemia, came without warning.

Newington was a gregarious man by nature. Despite his early training as an artist and his lifelong pleasure in painting as a pastime — he particularly enjoyed retreats to his studio in Spain — he evidently found greater fulfilment in the film-making profession and the opportunities it provided for travel and personal contact. He had the gift for friendship and was greatly loved by his family — he had a daughter, and a son by his first wife, Daphne, and a son by his second wife, Jean. They all survive him.

## ALICE HEMMING

Alice Hemming, OBE, journalist and pioneer of the women's movement, died on March 28 aged 86. She was born on September 18, 1907.



AFTER the abdication of King Edward VIII, Wallis Simpson in Paris chose to give her side of the story in an exclusive interview to Alice Hemming who, at the time, was working on a gossip column in the *London Sunday Dispatch* as the "Girl Friday" to the Marquess of Donegal. It was syndicated worldwide.

Born in London, Alice Hemming (née Weaver) moved to Canada as a child. After graduating from the University of British Columbia, she worked as a journalist on the *Vancouver Province* newspaper. She interviewed Harold Hemming, a banker who was leading a delegation of British headmasters visiting Canadian universities. She returned to London to work with him, translating books written by the French economist André Siegfried, and married Hemming in 1931.

After war work in London Alice Hemming went back to Vancouver in 1940 and was soon writing two regular newspaper columns (one under a pseudonym) and doing a daily radio broadcast, all in support of the British war effort. She spoke extensively in both Canada and the United States, including a successful lecture tour among the film stars of Hollywood. She also worked in Ottawa, creating the information department of the Canadian National Film Board under John Grierson.

Returning to England in 1944 with her two children, she devoted herself to the women's movement. She was a vice-president of both the International Alliance of Women and the Women's Council for several decades, and president of the Commonwealth Countries' League for 40 years. This organisation, devoted to helping women in Commonwealth countries and providing a social focus for diplomatic and other women visiting this country, grew rapidly during this period. Its annual fair was started in the Hemming house and developed into a major international event to provide funds to educate girls in Commonwealth countries.

Alice Hemming was appointed OBE for this work, and received honours from Canadian universities. A generous hostess, her large house and garden in Primrose Hill welcomed visitors from all parts of the world.

Her husband predeceased her and she is survived by a son and a daughter.

## ALASTAIR CRAM

Alastair Cram, MC, lawyer, soldier and mountaineer, died on March 17 aged 84. He was born on August 25, 1909.

ALASTAIR CRAM was a distinguished Scottish advocate and later a judge in Kenya and Malawi. What marked him out, however, was not merely the extraordinary variety of his mountaineering experiences in the Andes, the Himalayas, East Africa and Australia, but even more notably, his record of escapes as a prisoner of war.

Captured at Sidi Rezegh in 1941, he spent the first years of his captivity in Italy. There he teamed up first with Jack Pringle for two escapes from prisons in the south of Italy, and then, when David Stirling of SAS fame joined them in an escape from the citadel of Gavi in Liguria. No one had escaped from that fortress in 800 years. It was the prison in Italy which was equivalent to Colditz, but it was far more secure.

Recaptured, he, Pringle and Stirling were subsequently sent to Germany under heavy guard after Italy's capitulation. En route he escaped from the train just before it arrived at the Brenner Pass and spent the next two months alone on foot and by rail trying to reach Yugoslavia. Recaptured, once again at Graz, in Austria, he was sent to Märisch Trübau, a prison on the borders of Czechoslovakia and Poland. There he met up once again with Pringle and Stirling, who had arrived by a different route and after different adventures.

At Märisch Trübau, Stirling was planning a mass escape, quite coincidentally to take place just after the Sagan escape where most of the captured escapees had been shot. Cram, some time before, had volunteered to go to Prague to inform the Czech Resistance of the plan, an escape route having been engineered so that he could do this. The Sagan affair plus German suspicions that a similar escape was planned at Märisch Trübau led the Germans to transfer the whole camp of

3,000 prisoners to Brunswick at two weeks' notice. During this time Cram had reached Prague, but had been captured and tortured by the Gestapo, and then unexpectedly dispatched to the new Brunswick camp. When Pringle and Stirling were subsequently moved to Colditz, Cram remained in Brunswick. Cram was resolute and single-minded in his escape attempts, somewhat in the mould of Mike Sinclair at Colditz who escaped many times but was shot and killed in his last attempt three months before the war ended. With Jack Pringle, Cram was one of only two officers to have won the Military Cross, which he was awarded on his release in 1945, for his escape attempts.

Educated at Perth Academy and Edinburgh University, where he read law, Alastair Lorimer Cram was admitted as a Scottish solicitor in 1933. After the war he joined the Scottish Bar and spent some time with the War Crimes Group as a prosecuting counsel for the British Army. In 1948 he became a resident magistrate in Kenya, remaining there until he became a Puisne Judge of the High Court of Nyasaland in 1960. Once Nyasaland gained its independence as Malawi in 1964, he became its acting Chief Justice and, briefly, its Governor-General during the first year of Dr Hastings Banda's long rule. He retired as an Appellate Judge of the Supreme Court of Appeal of Malawi in 1968.

In his youth Cram had been a zealous mountaineer — mainly in the Alps — and it was an interest he kept up not only while serving in East Africa but in his retirement as well. He was still climbing in the Atlas mountains while in his sixties and was proud of having traversed the Great Dividing Range of Australia several times when well past his 70th birthday. He closed his mountaineering career by climbing the highest peak in Crete at the age of 79.

He is survived by his wife Isobel whom he married in 1951. There were no children.

## BASIL HUMPHREY

Basil Humphrey, CB, Parliamentary Counsel, 1967-80, died in Chichester of a heart attack on March 20 aged 75. He was born on September 21, 1918.

ONE of the formidable team of lawyers recruited as draftsman by the Parliamentary Counsel Office after the war, Basil Humphrey found his early years in the Government Legal Service somewhat frustrating. His original posting

had been to the Ministry of Health but he was poached from there at the beginning of 1949 by the then First Parliamentary Counsel, Sir Alan Ellis.

This was at a time when Herbert Morrison, as Leader of the House of Commons, had agreed to an enlargement of the Parliamentary Counsel establishment on the ground that more draftsman would be required if the postwar Labour Government's exceptionally heavy legislative

programme were to be successfully carried through.

Many years of experience as a "devil" are, however, needed before an apprentice to the difficult art of drafting can be let loose on a parliamentary Bill on his own. To make matters worse, in those days senior members of the office were reluctant to give their juniors their heads — a problem that has since been alleviated by the ever-increasing pressure of work. More than once in his career Humphrey

wondered whether he had been wise to pursue his calling in such an arcane field.

He was certainly a remarkably talented lawyer. Having read French and German at Cambridge before the war, he changed to law on his return from war service gaining first-class honours in Part II of the Law Tripos. He was called to the Bar by the Middle Temple in 1946 and, after serving a pupillage under the renowned Sir John Foster, passed top in the competition for entry into

the Government Legal Service in 1947. It was hardly surprising, therefore, if by 1961 — with full responsibility still some way away — he was manifesting certain signs of impatience. Fortunately, he was rescued by a secondment as First Parliamentary Counsel to the then newly-founded Federation of Nigeria. After that, although he was again unsettled immediately after his return in 1964, his career followed a more rewarding course.

Frank Basil Humphrey was educated at Brentwood School and St Catharine's College, Cambridge. Just before the outbreak of the Second World War he joined the Royal Artillery, becoming adjutant of the 23rd Mountain Regiment and DAAG of the 4th Corps in India and Burma. It was a tribute to his academic ability that, within a year of being demobilised, he had no difficulty in obtaining a first at Cambridge in a subject to which he had come afresh.

The important break in his professional life came with his posting to Nigeria. As well as drafting for that diverse and politically mercurial country a full measure of much-needed legislation, he carried through the necessary legal formalities required by the substantial emergency which arose in 1962. Most impressive of all, in 1963 he produced in less than three weeks of intensive work a rewritten constitution which turned the Federation into a Republic within the Commonwealth. It was the skill of his hand that provided the Nigerians with an autonomous constitution in place of the Westminster model handed over to them by Britain on the grant of independence in 1960. It was thus hardly surprising that on his return to



Whitehall he was disenchanted to find himself once again relegated to a subordinate role. Luckily, his resentment was mollified by promotion to Deputy Counsel in 1964, which was fairly quickly followed by his appointment as full Counsel in 1967.

For the next 13 years, until his retirement in 1980, he produced a steady stream of Bills on a wide variety of topics — ranging from the Hovercraft Act of 1968 through the Petroleum and Pipelines Act of 1975 to the Social Security Acts of 1980. In 1967 he played a prominent part in bringing to its final form Sir David Steel's Private Member's Bill to amend the law on abortion.

Basil Humphrey was never an easy colleague but away from the office he was an animated and amusing companion. He was a keen gardener, a tireless mountain walker and an accomplished amateur pianist — as well being widely read and fondly informed on most subjects.

He is survived by his Czechoslovak-born wife Olga, whom he married in 1947, and by two sons.

## PERSONAL COLUMN

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ANIMALS IN NEED

Please help in this desperate case of a small cat and a small dog who are in need of a home. They are both very friendly and would make a great addition to any home. For more information, please contact the Animal Welfare Society, 100, High Street, London EC2A 4DF.

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If you are making your will, please contact the will writers at 100, High Street, London EC2A 4DF. They will be happy to help you with your will and ensure that it is valid and legally sound.

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## THE TIMES

## COURT AND SOCIAL PAGE

Over the Easter Bank Holiday the following deadlines will apply:  
Notices for Monday April 4th and Tuesday April 5th should be received in writing by Thursday March 31st at 10am.  
All announcements accepted subject to confirmation.  
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## THE TIMES NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS

To place your Personal advertisement or Birth, Marriage or Death Notices for Friday 1st April please call no later than:  
12 noon on Thursday 31st March  
On Saturday 2nd April our staff will be available on the normal telephone number  
071 481 4000  
between 9.30am and 12.30pm.  
Our offices will be closed on the following dates:  
Friday 1st April  
Monday 4th April  
If you wish to book an announcement during the Bank Holiday please telephone  
0374 617843  
where our staff will be available to take your call between 9.30 and 4pm

## THE HATPIN DANGER

To the Editor of The Times

Sir, — It is almost a daily occurrence that some accident of one kind or another has to be reported through the negligent way in which ladies wear hatpins.

Last night about 6 o'clock I entered the tube lift at the Post Office Station, just at the time when the crush of the people homewards bound is at its height, when I saw two young girls entering the lift just in front of me, both wearing two or three hatpins protruding about three or four inches.

While I was still contemplating on the very evident danger and trying in a pure sense of self-preservation not to come into touch with these uninviting necessities of the otherwise attractive toilette of the woman of to-day, one of the young ladies moved, in conversation with her friend, her head to one side, and one of her hatpins went right into the eye of a gentleman standing next to me.

It was quite a miracle that he was not

## ON THIS DAY

March 31 1914

The correspondent's case was strengthened by his pointing out that in France and Germany, "not to mention the Colonies", the wearing of protected hatpins was compulsory.

seriously hurt or blinded in one eye, perhaps for a lifetime. He only complained of a momentary pain and, evidently no harm being done, very little further notice was taken of this incident. But what would have happened if the man had lost his eyesight, which, after all, was only saved by a fraction of an inch? Would he have been able to get adequate compensation?

As it was, the girl seemed to belong to the poorer class, and she could have hardly been expected to pay any

damages, as in a case in the Law Courts a few weeks ago when a lady was fined £3 for having inadvertently scratched the face of another lady with her hatpin. Besides, any monetary compensation would have been only a very poor consolation and both parties can be jolly glad that nothing serious had come of it. But this is only one case, one case out of many. As a daily user of the tube and the congested lifts in the morning and evening, I can invariably see people dodging protruding hatpins. Endless correspondence has been written, most of the papers have brought leading articles bearing on that subject, besides giving prominence to accidents in their news columns; notices have been put up in all the L.C.C. tramcars to urge ladies to wear protected hatpins; and still the majority of women go about without even considering to what risks they expose their fellow-creatures.

Yours faithfully,

One For All.



● Climbing Low's heights safely ● Walkers asked to pay as they stray ● Channel drift

## Mountain drama draws tourists

By TONY DAW

TRAVEL companies are queuing up to capitalise on the dramatic rescue of the British servicemen on Mount Kinabalu in northern Borneo by offering to guide tourists to the summit.

Groups will be led up to Low's Peak, named after Sir Hugh Low, the British officer who made the first ascent in 1851, but will be steered well away from Low's Gully, the rock precipice beneath which Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Neill, Major Ron Foster and three Hong Kong colleagues were trapped for 21 days.

Tony Champion, managing director of Magic of the Orient, says: "We are eager to let people know that they can climb Mount Kinabalu by a far easier way than the one the British soldiers attempted. Thousands of people get to the top each year by the scenic tourist route."

The company's brochure paints a different picture of the highest mountain in South-East Asia from the one presented in a hundred news reports in the past week. "Although standing at 13,455ft, the mountain is surprisingly easy to

climb, requiring no special skills or equipment, just stamina," it says. "Anyone in good health and taking regular exercise ought to be able to manage it."

The adventure can be completed in two stages: a day's gentle climb to the Laban Rata rest house at 10,700ft, followed by a short night's sleep before starting on the final ascent at 3am to catch sunrise from the peak. A three-day trip, which costs £125 a person and includes a day's acclimatisation, can be incorporated into any tailor-made holiday to the Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak in North Borneo.

Among those who will try the climb this summer are 13 boys and four girls, aged 15 to 18, from Cullford School, in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. They will be led by Jeff Beatty, head of biology at the school, and joined by a former Army captain from World Challenge Expeditions, an organisation that runs adventure courses. Mr Beatty says: "The publicity has only made the children more excited. Far from having second thoughts, they are looking forward to it."

Borneo Endeavour, which claims to be the specialist in adventure holidays in the region, is also expecting a surge of interest in its three-day trips up the mountain. It also offers jungle trekking to join the Lumad tribe for a night of war dances and blowpipe lessons. Getting out of the jungle is up to the tourists, however — they are expected to construct bamboo rafts, with help from experts, for the four-hour river cruise back to normality.

Twickers World, based in Twickenham, west London, is also advertising the less strenuous joys of Borneo. The company's "Borneo forests and wildlife tour" includes a journey by canoe to a traditional longhouse and a visit to the Gomantong caves, home to two million bats, as well as the swiflets that create the nests prized by Chinese cooks.

Though it welcomes the extra interest, the Malaysian tourist promotion board emphasises that all adventure activities should be properly planned with tour operators and supervised by specialists on the ground.



Mount Kinabalu — thousands of people get to the top each year by the scenic tourist route

## Western ferries cash in

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

FAMILY holidaymakers are turning their backs on the cheap and short but often crowded and noisy cross-Channel "booster cruises", and opting for the longer Western sea routes to France.

Up to 25 per cent of passengers on the shorter routes in the Eastern channel are making the crossing solely to buy the cheap beer and wine on board or in supermarkets around the main ports. This has, however, led to a change in image and put off many up-market holidaymakers and families, who prefer dinner with wine and a comfortable cabin during a leisurely overnight crossing.

Britannia Ferries has benefited both from the shift westwards by "serious" holidaymakers and a promotional drive by the walled town of St Malo, with a four-fold increase in bookings on the Portsmouth-St Malo route. Although the 23,000-ton ferry Bretagne on the route can carry 2,000 passengers and 580 cars, the company is having to introduce a second service to St Malo from Poole in May to meet the growing demand from what ferry companies call "the Range Rover set".

P&O European Ferries reports a 40 per cent increase in passengers and have therefore decided to put two bigger ferries on the Portsmouth to Le Havre route. Each ship, the Pride of Portsmouth and the Pride of Le Havre, can accommodate 1,600 passengers and 600 cars. Both were built four years ago for Olau Line, which is closing its services between Sheerness and Vlissingen, Holland. Graeme Dunlop, chairman of P&O European Ferries, says: "Lack of capacity over recent years has meant we have not been able to take full advantage of the market growth in the Western Channel."

French-owned Brittany Ferries also expects a boost to its western France and Spanish services after tens of thousands of veterans recreate the D-Day landings in Normandy. Many are expected to return later in the year, at prices from £88 for a car and up to five passengers, and when they can tour the battlefield sites at leisure.

## Visitors will be asked to help save the Peak

By MARIANNE CURPHEY



Edale: one of the Peak District villages that are under threat

THE 22 million walkers and day-trippers who visit the Peak District each year are to be asked to make a voluntary donation towards its upkeep.

At present, it costs nothing to drive and walk within the park, but wardens are becoming increasingly concerned about the effects of thousands of family cars blocking roads into rural villages.

Under a new scheme to provide a fund to repair environmental damage, drivers are to be asked to make a donation of at least 20p per car to a heritage fund. Guests at hotels and B&Bs are to be encouraged to add up to £1 to their bill. The money will go directly to conservation projects in the 800 square miles of limestone dales and moors and

could raise up to £70,000 in its first year.

Donations would pay for park and ride schemes, traffic-calming measures, tree-planting and repairs to damaged fences, dry stone walls and footpaths.

Park managers are also launching a campaign with British Rail to encourage signposts to use public transport, and BR is laying on extra Sunday services from May to September.

Chris Lewis, project manager of the Peak Tourism Partnership, an association set up to advise on visitor management, said: "More than 75 per cent of people realise they cause damage and our survey

last year found most would contribute towards the upkeep of the park if a trust was established."

Weekend congestion is most serious in the Hope Valley, with an estimated two million tourists a year crowding in. A plan is already underway to restore vegetation on top of Kinder Scout, part of the Pennine Way footpath, which has been severely eroded by walkers.

Mr Lewis said: "If only 30 per cent of the estimated 300,000 car park users each year in the Castleton-Edale-Hope area contributed 20p, this would raise £18,000. We hope to raise another £50,000 through accommodation levies."

John Anfield, director of planning at the Peak National Park, said: "This is not a tourist tax and we are keen that all money is given on a voluntary basis."

Locals often resent the growing tide of tourists and now actively support the scheme.

Stuart Elliott, a Hope farmer representing residents of the three villages, said: "We need a plan for sustainable tourism, which puts something back into the area."

The new Peak District Tourism and Environment Fund is likely to be launched in May and has the support of the Countryside Commission, which says there is "a host of good will from people keen to put their money towards real conservation projects".

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# Working while you fly • Checking on atmospheric pollution • Scottish reshaping

## Business office takes to the air



Working while flying, a businessman makes connections via satellite with ground computers

By DAVID HEWSON

A NEW generation of satellite links is about to turn airline seats into high-tech mobile offices and entertainment centres. The world's leading airlines plan to install costly air-to-ground services that let passengers make phone calls, use notebook computers on-line, send and receive faxes, watch live news and book hotel rooms and flights from the air.

The key link will come on line later this year when Inmarsat switches on its new satellite communications system to introduce the first fast and easy link between airlines and ground phone and computer networks.

Ultra-modern in-flight communications are due to appear towards the end of the year. Airlines such as Virgin are promising phones, computer sockets and enhanced entertainment packages on their A340 and 747-400 planes from November. Some of the most sophisticated will be seen when United Airlines pioneers the launch of Boeing's new 777 super-jumbo on transatlantic routes from May next year.

By the end of this year, air travellers will be able to send and receive faxes and watch live news broadcasts thanks to complex new satellite links

United has paid \$100 million for a satellite communications installation by GEC-Marconi that will fit an in-flight services system to all 34 of its 300-seat 777s on order.

Passengers on a United 777 will be able to watch video programmes with multi-language stereo sound tracks, listen to 24 audio channels, play computer games, and access huge, live data banks that store maps of airport locations, and details of connecting flights. They will be able to shop using an interactive screen, and items will be delivered either on the plane or waiting when they land.

In first and business class, passengers will have an individual viewing screen about 6in wide. Economy flyers will have a smaller screen. Phone handsets and a socket for connecting notebook computers to the satellite phone

system will be built into every business and first class seat. Economy passengers will probably use a phone "kiosk" serving several rows of seats.

Customer research by several carriers shows a strong desire among business flyers for the ability to phone out and send faxes from an aircraft. But few want their meal disturbed by incoming calls or messages so some carriers are looking at the idea of setting up a business centre on the plane, partitioned from the rest of the plane, where travellers can use phones, faxes and computers when they like, and rest in their seats for the remainder of the journey.

Computer manufacturers such as Compaq believe the increased use of notebooks in the air will spur already soaring sales of highly complex portable computers to business travellers.

## Spain lures Russians

THE Spanish seaside resort of Benidorm is turning to Russia to boost its reputation as Europe's most popular holiday destination.

A team of civic and tourism leaders is to fly to Moscow within the next few weeks to help launch a new Russian holiday brochure featuring the town and to stimulate the growth of package tours from the former Soviet Union.

Bellver Tours, a new Russian company selling holidays to the new rich of Moscow and Leningrad, plans to operate one Aeroflot charter flight a week to Benidorm from the summer.

## Heroic voyages

A 106-day world cruise following the routes taken by the early navigators and explorers will set off next year — and the most expensive cabin will cost £77,051 a person.

The Royal Viking Line's 36,000-ton Royal Viking Sun will leave San Francisco on January 8 to follow the routes of sailors such as Vasco da Gama, Magellan and Henry the Navigator.

Eighteen-night segments can be booked through Kloster Cruises (071-234 0773) from £4,616 a person.

## New directory

A travel directory for regular business travellers listing every airline, air and seaport and officially recognised and licensed tour operator in Britain has been published by ABTN (0707 665454).

The 500-page book — The Travel Directory — is not available at bookshops and costs £33.

Travel News is edited by Harvey Elliott



The battle of Culloden, 1746: the Highlands never really recovered from the defeat and subsequent economic failures

## Highlands woo English

By SIMON TAYLOR

FOUR regional tourist boards have been given two years to persuade the English to visit Scotland's Highlands and Islands. In a potentially confusing change of responsibility, the task of selling north Scotland's attractions will today be transferred from the Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) to four Area Tourist Boards. In two years' time, however, they will in turn have to hand over to a national tourist board.

The Government claims the move will simplify its campaign to bring more tourists north of the border, but some industry figures fear the series of changes will complicate initiatives to revive the region's fortunes.

The Scottish Highlands never really recovered after the Battle of Culloden two and a half centuries ago, and it is hoped that next year's celebrations of the 250th anniversary of the Jacobite Rebellion will

draw record visitors to the beleaguered northeastern corner of Scotland.

Tourism is probably the last chance for the region after a dour political and economic history. After Culloden in 1746, came the Clearances when sheep replaced clans people; the 1860s gold rush, which failed to bring lasting prosperity; and the devastation of the coastal fishing industry when a change in the Gulf Stream took away the

herring. Salmon farming, too, has been a comparative failure, oil fabrication did not take off and now the Dounreay nuclear reactor in Caithness is to be shut down and eventually abandoned.

Mike Young, head of tourism marketing for the three-year-old HIE, has identified tourism as "potentially the most important industry for the Highlands". He adds: "There are huge opportunities here."

## Jets to monitor airborne mess

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

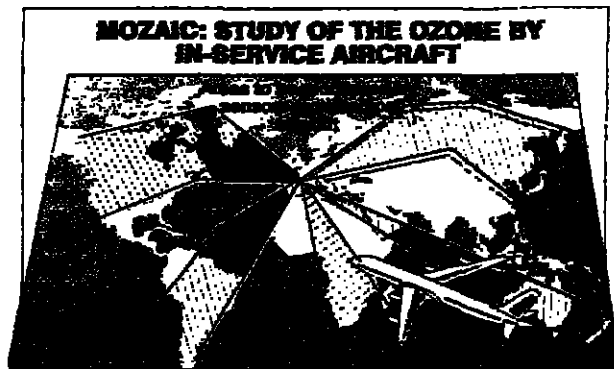
FIVE new Airbus A340 jets are to be fitted with sophisticated air quality monitoring equipment in a £2.3 million scheme to measure pollutants and ozone levels.

The aircraft will be used on normal commercial services by Air France, Austrian Airlines, Lufthansa and Sabena.

The European Union is meeting half the cost of MOZALC — Measurement of Ozone on Airbus in-service aircraft — with Airbus and the

airlines funding the rest. The scientific flights will begin next month and continue until the end of 1995.

Scientists are alarmed at the sharp increase in ozone in the troposphere, but admit they know little about its cause. One source, however, is known to be nitrogen oxide which is emitted by industry through the burning of fuel — including aviation fuel in aircraft engines. Although the new generation of more powerful



erful aero-engines are cleaner and deposit far fewer hydrocarbons they do create more nitrogen oxide; scientists predict the level will double by the year 2005 as air travel grows.

The Airbus jets will take

automatic measurements of ozone and water vapour levels every four seconds during flights. During a full year the five aircraft will accumulate some 240 million recordings. The data will be passed on to engine makers.

## How firms can save on insurance

By GILLIAN WILLIAMS

MEDIUM-sized companies could save up to £100 a year for each travelling staff member by switching from individual to group business travel insurance policies.

Insurers are prepared to reduce premiums for group

accounts by spreading the risk over the greater numbers who make more trips. Group policies are less prone to fraud because there is less temptation to exaggerate the worth of lost luggage when seniors have countersigned claims.

Companies should also be able to declare group policies

as tax-deductible items; an individual policy claimed back on expenses is liable to be deemed a taxable perk.

Jeffrey Klipp, managing director of Marcus Hearn, a broking firm, says his company had recently saved a client with 27 business travellers £1,800 a year in premiums by

switching to a group policy. "If they had individual annual policies," he says, "premiums could have been £3,000, but we were able to quote £1,200 because business travellers do not need all the components in a standard package. The risk is totally different."

Home & Overseas, a travel insurance company, insures 500,000 business travellers at an average premium of £25 each for annual cover. In contrast, individual annual policies cost between £100 and £140, depending on the parts of the world visited.

Steve Nickerson, managing director of rival Accident & General, says that group policies could be tailored to company requirements. "If you buy something that has not been put together as a one-off product," he says, "you get some elements of cover that are not relevant." Home & Overseas believes that between 40 and 50 per cent of business travellers taking foreign trips do not have any form of insurance cover and that the figure is even higher for domestic travel.

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## Champagne all the way

Join The Times on a flight to the Piper-Heidsieck vineyards and enjoy a gourmet five-course lunch



Reims cathedral and (right) the candlelit Caveau Marie-Antoinette dining-room



Sunday, May 1 will be a Day of Excellence for readers of The Times. A special flight has been arranged to take champagne-lovers to Reims, the home of the House of Piper-Heidsieck, founded in 1785 and long since the maker of the finest champagnes.

The full, exciting day starts at London Gatwick at 9am with a special chartered flight to Reims, during which champagne will be served. On arrival, guests will be taken to the Piper-Heidsieck vineyards and given a guided tour of the £1.5 million Circuit de Visite set among ten miles of cool cellars hewn into the thick, chalk stratum.

Here, readers will see part of the champagne production process and enjoy a tasting session. With palates

THE TIMES

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duly primed, there then follows a superb five-course lunch, prepared by top chefs, in the outstanding restaurant created in the cellars, which date back to the French Revolution.

Set under huge, arched vaults, the candlelit Caveau

Marie-Antoinette is one of the finest "dining rooms" in France, and the food, accompanied by a selection of the fine Piper-Heidsieck champagnes, matches the breathtaking setting.

After lunch, there will be an opportunity to buy champagne at discount prices before driving into Reims to visit the city centre and its famous medieval cathedral.

The return flight arrives at Gatwick at 6.45pm. The cost of this splendid offer, including flights, is £169. Places are limited and we advise early booking.

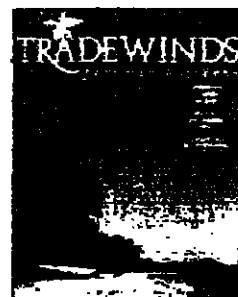
For details of the Times offer, call Page & Moy on 0533 524433 (Ref FJ2327), or write to: The Times Champagne Flight, Page & Moy, 136-140 London Road, Leicester LE2 1EN.



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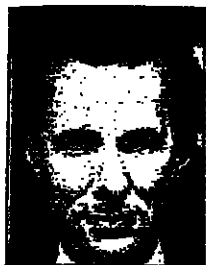
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ANATOLE KALETSKY 29

Why stock markets  
around the  
world are falling



ARTS 37-39

Triumph for  
Helen Mirren  
in Turgenev



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Danny Sapsford  
holds court  
at Bracknell

BOOKS:  
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# THE TIMES

THURSDAY MARCH 31 1994

## GEC preferred bidder for bulk of Ferranti

By ROSS TIEMAN  
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE General Electric Company appears set to beat off a challenge by a French-backed management and employee consortium to buy most of the businesses of the collapsed Ferranti International group.

Murdoch McKillop and John Talbot, the administrative receivers of Arthur Andersen, have reached outline agreement for the sale of Ferranti's defence, simulation and training businesses to GEC. The bid by the leading British defence and electronics group, believed to total almost £100 million, will secure the jobs of

some 1,110 of Ferranti's remaining 1,850 United Kingdom employees. The GEC bid is also understood to include an offer to buy the receivers' 50 per cent stake in Ferranti Thomson Sonar Systems, a joint venture with Thomson CSF of France, which is not in receivership, and Ferranti's American arm.

Ferranti's United States defence systems business, which has some 700 employees and contracts with the US Department of Defence, is understood to harbour licence arrangements crucial to GEC's missile business in the United Kingdom.

In Britain, GEC is negotiating to buy Ferranti's Defence Systems Integration business which employs 570 at Bracknell, Berkshire; Newport

Pagnell, Buckinghamshire, and Portsmouth, Hampshire. The talks also cover Ferranti Simulation and Training employing 540 people at Cwmbran, Gwent; Cheadle Heath, Cheshire and Totnes, Devon.

Separate discussions covering Ferranti's civil business, which employs 535 people in Greater Manchester at Wythenshawe, and the component manufacturing business, employing 515 nearby at Oldham, are continuing with a number of interested parties. A management consortium has made an offer for the Oldham operation. Talks about the satellite communications activity, employing 100 at Poynton, Devon, are also continuing.

The announcement that GEC has

been declared "preferred bidder" and given several weeks to conclude a deal was welcomed by the MSF technical union, which represents many Ferranti employees.

Larry Brooks, national officer, said it was "good news for those whose jobs have been at risk and good news for Britain". Union officials will press for a meeting with Lord Weinstock, GEC's managing director, when they talk to bosses at GEC's Marconi defence arm next month.

Phil Burton, the Ferranti marketing director heading the employee buyout consortium, was clearly disappointed, but not ready to concede defeat. "We are discussing the situation with our financial backers and

trade partners," he said. "We are staying in touch with the receivers. Our bid is still on the table."

Thomson CSF of France is understood to be backing the employee buyout and stands willing to take a 30 per cent stake. Thomson, which is largely a defence systems group, may not be interested in the civil businesses which are not covered by the GEC offer. However, it is understood that Alain Gomez, the Thomson chairman, has already indicated to Lord Weinstock that he would be happy to have GEC as a partner in the sonar joint venture.

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Temps, page 29

## Sterling at lowest for five months

By JANET BUSH  
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

SHARES and the pound fell sharply yesterday, reflecting concern by investors about the disarray in the Government. Sterling fell to a five-month low against the mark, leaving its trade-weighted index against a basket of currencies at 79.4, from 79.8. The FT-SE 100 index lost 31 to end at 3,092.4. In contrast, gilts rallied strongly with some traders suggesting rumours in the market yesterday morning that John Major was about to resign actually spurred buying. Long-dated gilts ended more than 2½ points higher.

Political concerns dominated sentiment in the markets. John Shepperd, chief economist at Yamaichi International Europe, said: "It is not just a question of whether Major will stay or go. There is a general lack of confidence in the Conservative government."

Selling of sterling fed through to equities on the argument that a weaker pound would make it more difficult to cut interest rates further. Investors also felt it would be hard to justify a rate cut at the moment because it would be interpreted as a political move to recoup some popularity for the Government.

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, and Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, met yesterday for their monthly meeting to discuss monetary policy but few market participants believe a rate cut will have been decided, in spite of the statement in the Treasury's monthly monetary report yesterday that inflationary pressures remain weak.

This, coupled with a successful gilts auction yesterday — the sale of £2.5 billion of floating rate gilts was oversubscribed 2.28 times — helped gilts to their best performance for weeks with some genuine buying despite sterling's woes.

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Anatole Kaletsky, page 29

BUSINESS EDITOR  
Robert Ballantyne

BUSINESS  
TODAY

HAT-TRICK



Harrisons & Crossfield, the plantations group, has not covered its annual dividend with earnings for three years in a row  
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SINGLE OUT

Chambers of Commerce are urging the Government to force late payers to make compensation  
Page 26

DOUBLE



The Co-operative Bank almost doubled profits last year thanks to a fall in bad debts and a rise in fee income  
Page 33

NO QUARTER

American markets are reacting with great sensitivity to any signs of inflation and interest rises  
Page 33

## Commons committee attacks liquidator

■ The liquidators of Robert Maxwell's personal estate have been accused by an influential Commons committee of charging £1.1 million to raise £1.2 million

By ROBERT MILLER

A HIGHLY critical report, published yesterday by the Commons Social Security Committee, has accused Buchler Phillips, the liquidator of the personal estate of Robert Maxwell, of charging fees of £1.1 million while raising only £1.2 million from Maxwell's assets.

The committee said Buchler Phillips had provided information "which placed too great an emphasis on the likely gross size and value of the personal estate and was, therefore, misleading. We believe that this was designed to make the task of acting as receiver appear more significant than it actually was, which in turn has enabled Buchler Phillips to maximise its fee income and to garner more publicity opportunities." Early estimates by Buchler Phillips that £8.75 million could be recovered from Maxwell's estate and made available to Maxwell pensioners have not been realised "and evidently never will be", said the committee. As an example, it quotes Maxwell's shares in

Oxford United Football Club. These were originally valued at £2.75 million but ended up fetching only £10,000. The committee recommended Maxwell's personal estate should be declared insolvent and a trustee in bankruptcy appointed. But it would not be appropriate for Buchler Phillips to get this appointment.

Peter Phillips, senior partner of Buchler Phillips, said the report was "a publicity seeking exercise from a committee, which sadly, after months of investigation, has produced nothing of any impact."

He added: "What is the intention behind issuing an 18-page report full of vitriol and inaccuracies about an assignment which has throughout had the most minimal relevance to the pensioners who have suffered so badly at the hands of Robert Maxwell? Mr Field's interest throughout in my activities has been disproportionate in my importance to the recovery process and well beyond his parliamentary remit."



Peter Phillips said the report was a publicity seeking exercise from a committee producing nothing of impact

Mr Phillips said that his firm had spent more than 3,100 hours on the Robert Maxwell case since December 1991. The average hourly rate charged to the Maxwell personal estate was £167 which he believed to be "the market rate for the job".

Mr Phillips has referred the report to Betty Boothroyd, the Speaker of the House, as "an outrageous abuse of the parliamentary system" and has asked his professional body, the Insolvency Practitioners Association (IPA) to investigate his handling of the receiver-

ship. Patrick Harrigan, president of the 800-strong association, which also issues licences to its members to practice, said last night: "We will be looking into this case."

The row between Buchler Phillips and the Commons committee has once again highlighted the ever-rising cost in fees of tracing and recovering Maxwell's assets. In total, these fees have already exceeded £76 million.

Neil Cooper, of accountant Robson Rhodes, the joint liquidator of Bishopsgate Investment Management, which is

central to the whole Maxwell pensions issue, had charged £3.1 million by the end of last year.

In addition, it had generated further legal costs of £4.5 million in the worldwide search for the missing Robert Maxwell millions.

Mr Cooper commented: "Out of an estimated £700 million of missing funds, we have secured more than £350 million. We also have legal actions in progress against Lehmanns, Credit Suisse and BNP, the French bank."

## GKN wins Westland battle

By MARTIN WALLER, DEPUTY CITY EDITOR

BRITAIN'S last independent helicopter producer has lost its takeover fight. GKN, the diversified engineer, is hoping to declare its increased bid for Westland, valuing the company at £577 million, unconditional some time today.

GKN raised its bid to 335p a share, from 290p already on offer, yesterday morning and followed up the announcement with active buying in the stock market by Warburg Securities, its broker.

By the end of trading, GKN, which started the day with a 45 per cent holding in the Yeovil helicopter manufacturer, had raised its holding to 54.4 per cent. The latest offer is for cash, but there is an alternative under which

Westland shareholders can take the original terms of 290p and, in addition, a share of the eventual proceeds of long-running litigation Westland is engaged in with the Arab Organisation for Industrialisation over some earlier lost orders.

Westland shares immediately jumped 8p to 333p as the market sensed an easy win for GKN. The company was refusing any formal comment until the offer is officially unconditional, but there was immediate speculation over the future of Alan Jones, its chairman. Sir David Lees, his counterpart at GKN, is thought keen for him to remain.

Pennington, page 27

## Names stop-loss warning

By SARAH BAGNALL, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

HUNDREDS of Lloyd's names who prudently reinsured themselves against massive insurance losses have been told their claims are unlikely to be met in full.

In direct conflict to Lloyd's assertion that all policyholders' claims are met, names are being told that claims made under their personal stop-loss policies (PSL) are likely to be only partly paid. Sedgwick Lloyd's Underwriting Agents, one of the biggest Lloyd's agencies, has written to its names warning them about their PSL reinsurance for 1989 and 1990. The agency said because two insurance companies, Stockholm Re and Municipal General Insurance, which participated in the reinsurance of names' policies

have collapsed, obligations are not being met. Both Stockholm Re, based in Bermuda, and MGI, a 100 per cent owned subsidiary of the Municipal Mutual Insurance, have stopped paying out on claims, a move that is being challenged by Holman Wade, broker to the policies.

Sedgwick warns names that in spite of attempts by Holman Wade "full recovery is unlikely".

Meanwhile, Merrett Holdings, the troubled Lloyd's agency, announced a loss of £3.5 million for the year to September 30, compared with a loss of £649,000 last time. The loss reflects the lack of any profit commissions from the 1990 account, compared with £2.4 million last time.

STOCK MARKET		THE POUND		GOLD	
FT-SE 100 3092.4 -31.0	DOW JONES 3674.83 -24.19	Dm 2.4835 -0.0058	US \$ 1.4790 -0.0132	BRENT CRUDE \$12.05 per barrel (May)	
Midday trading figure					

LONDON CLOSING PRICES

MARKETS IN DETAIL PAGE 28, SHARE PRICES PAGE 30

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## Highlights from Standard Life's Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 15 November 1993

### The Group

**RESULTS** Total new premiums world-wide increased by 15% to £2.8bn with assets under management increasing by nearly £8bn to over £36bn.

**BONUSES** Since the beginning of the year interest rates and inflation have fallen further in all the countries in which we operate, and with them our expectations of future investment returns. Last year we indicated that if this were to happen it would be necessary for us to reduce our rates of reversionary bonus and bonus growth for unitholders with profit funds. This year we have decided, therefore, to declare reduced reversionary bonus and bonus growth rates for most classes of business in the United Kingdom, Canada and the Republic of Ireland.

Even after the reductions our with-profit growth rates will compare extremely favourably with bank and building society deposit rates. In the UK, for example, we will be adding 8.5% before tax, and 7% after tax, to the benefits attaching to a typical policy, with the potential for some terminal bonus in addition. Our with-profit policies continue to be highly attractive investments and we remain confident that they will continue to provide returns which are consistently amongst the very best available.

**STAFF** The Group was successful in much of what it set out to achieve over the year. This was very much due to the enthusiastic and energetic way in which our staff, in whatever capacity they were employed, responded to challenges and opportunities.

Our training and development programmes continue to evolve in support of our business needs. During 1994, the great majority of our staff will undergo training specifically designed to increase focus on customer service.

Two years ago we underlined our commitment to staff development by seeking to meet the Government-sponsored 'Investors in People' standard. We are delighted to be able to report that, in February of this year, we were acknowledged as having met the necessary standards for this award, becoming the first major life assurance company in the UK to have done so.

**DIRECTORS** This year sees the retirement of three non-executive directors, each of whom has contributed greatly to the Company's activities. Colin Crole retired on 31 December 1993 after more than 25 years' service as a director and at the close of the Annual General Meeting we shall lose the services of Sir Lawrence Airey, who has been Deputy Chairman since 1988, and Sir Robert Smith who joined the Board in 1975 and was Chairman from 1982 to 1988.

### United Kingdom

**NEW BUSINESS** Total new premium income in the UK increased by 20% to some £2bn.

**DISTRIBUTION** During the year we announced that the tied agency agreement between us and the Halifax Building Society will cease early in 1995. This agreement, under which the Halifax sells Standard Life products, began in July 1989 and has been of benefit to the customers of both organisations. Discussions took place during the year on various ways in which we and the Halifax might continue working together in the provision of insurance and investment products. In the event, it did not prove possible to identify a form of joint involvement which enabled the Halifax to meet its long-term objectives and at the same time allowed us to develop fully our business through other distribution channels. Any meaningful form of joint involvement would have required, on our part, a significant diversion of the various resources available to us and we concluded that the retention of direct control of these resources was essential for the long-term and profitable development of the Group. Both companies therefore decided that the interests of their respective customers would be best served by our taking separate paths on the cessation of the existing tied relationship.

Looking to the future, our aim is to build a distribution system which is both robust and broadly-based. We remain very committed to the Independent Financial Adviser market and indeed some 65% of our business last year was derived from this source. We have in recent years made good progress in building up our Customer Service Consultant (CSC) and Appointed Representative channels but have now decided to develop our CSCs, of whom we now have some 350, into a much larger direct sales team. The creation over the next few years of a major direct sales force will bring considerably greater balance to our distribution capability and will allow us to develop our business further in a manner, and at a pace, of our own choosing.

**REGULATION** Standard Life has consistently supported firm and effective regulation of the sales of investment products. We believe that the creation of a single regulator to cover the sales of life assurance, unit trust and friendly society products could be a significant step towards that end. It is, though, essential that the new regulatory body should be soundly constituted and properly accountable. Changes to our regulatory regime are expensive and contribute to uncertainty amongst customers so the new structure must be both durable and worthy of trust.

**SERVICE** In recent years we have referred to our commitment to improving the quality of service which we provide to

our customers. To do this we must continuously strive to increase our focus on customers by assessing, and then ensuring that we meet, their requirements. We believe that we have made further progress over the year in this but recognise that much still needs to be done before we can claim to be meeting fully our customers' needs. We have therefore recently undertaken a detailed review, involving both research with policyholders and intermediaries and discussions with many members of our staff, to help us determine more clearly the further improvements which we must make.

Our plan, to which reference was made last year, to re-organise structurally the way in which we deliver service to new and existing policyholders was successfully implemented over the year. New business is now being processed in our Area Offices with existing business service provided mainly by Head Office. These arrangements have both shortened lines of communication and increased accountability, and as a result are already facilitating a faster and better service to our customers.

**INVESTMENT** In the UK, economic recovery has been patchy. There were concerns during the summer that weakness in European economies could threaten recovery in the UK, and these were compounded by the size of the Government's funding requirement. Market sentiment improved in the second half of the year as German interest rates were cut. Investors' confidence was increased by lower UK interest rates and increasing company profits and dividends.

During the year most of the new money available to us was invested in fixed interest securities as we sought to increase modestly the proportion of our with-profit funds held in that asset class. Around 90% of these funds are invested in equity-type assets which we continue to believe will provide our policyholders with the best long-term rates of return.

### Canada

Market conditions were difficult in 1993 and, in addition, the restructuring of the Canadian financial services industry continued unabated.

In this environment, although we did not meet all of our objectives, preliminary data show that we have maintained and even increased our market share relative to other life offices in most of our lines of business. A major contributor to this achievement was our very high retention rate of existing business.

During the year we acquired the business of Sovereign Life. While the integration process is still continuing, the addition of the Sovereign sales force and policies has given us increased exposure in markets where we had been less visible. We believe that similar opportunities may present themselves as the restructuring of the life industry in Canada continues.

Financial markets, both bonds and equities, performed well over the year, with the former producing a return over 15% and the latter over 30%. We believe the real estate market has now reached a cyclical low in Canada and there are some signs of firming in demand for retail and industrial space.

### Republic of Ireland

A Government initiative to encourage savings through special cash deposit accounts enjoying a favourable tax regime tilted the playing field against our products. In addition, competition from products which we have chosen not to offer, such as With Profit Bonds, caused sales of our single premium bonds to suffer. Overall annual premium business fell by 6%, while single premium business decreased by 4%. In all the circumstances this is a creditable performance.

The process of transferring to the Republic of Ireland a number of important administrative functions is now nearly complete. Our management team in Dublin now has full responsibility for almost all aspects of our business in the Republic in order to allow it fully to meet the specific needs of our customers in that country.

### Spain

An important development over the year was our purchase of the Spanish life insurance company, Prosperity SA. This is our first step along the path of developing the business of the Group within the European Union. Prosperity SA is based in Barcelona and has branches in 21 locations throughout Spain. We took it both as a sign that the market had welcomed us and as confirmation that we had acquired an excellent organisation when Prosperity in November won a major brokers' award.

In 1994 and beyond, we will bring more products to the Spanish market and expand our network of branches and agents. With the natural growth in the market and the quality of our products and of our management and staff in Spain, we look forward with confidence to the future of this part of the Group.

Policyholders may obtain a copy of the Annual Report and Accounts, including an agenda for the Annual General Meeting, by writing to Customer Relations Department at 120 Dundas Street, Edinburgh EH3 5DY or by telephoning (031) 245 2030.

**STANDARD LIFE**

The Standard Life Assurance Company is a mutual company registered in Scotland (no 524). Head Office: 3 George Street, Edinburgh. The Standard Life marketing group includes Standard Life Investment Funds Limited, Standard Life Personal Finance Limited, Standard Life Trust Management Limited, Halifax Standard Trust Management Limited. Member of LIAFRO. Member of LIAFRO and LIAFRO.

## Chambers want law for interest on late payment

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

**BUSINESS** leaders from the Chambers of Commerce will today urge the Government to bring in new laws to provide for statutory interest on the late payment of debt.

Though the move by the British Chambers of Commerce sits uneasily with business pressure for less intervention by government, chambers' leaders admitted yesterday that they and other business organisations had failed to persuade companies to move voluntarily towards more prompt payment of bills.

Michael Heseltine, President of the Board of Trade, will hear from chambers today that late payment is now an "everyday part" of British business and damaging companies that want to grow.

BCC leaders said yesterday that by restricting the growth of primarily small businesses that the Government claims are essential for full economic recovery, late payment was jeopardising that recovery.

In a consultation exercise that ends today, Mr Heseltine is seeking views on what steps the Government could take to limit the impact of late payment of debt.

Whitehall insiders doubt, though, that the Government will wish to go as far as making the payment of interest on late debt statutory, and may instead again try a voluntary approach based on the introduction of a new British Standard on prompt payment.

Nevertheless, Richard Brown, BCC Deputy Director-General, said that despite the reservations of companies — especially small businesses — about Government intervention, BCC members had made it clear there was scope for stronger statutory action. Describing late payment as a "major problem to the whole of business", he said that the "endemic culture" of late payment had to change.

The chambers will support their case to Mr Heseltine today with a special survey of late payment, showing that 94



Michael Heseltine will hear from business leaders today

per cent of the almost 700 sample companies surveyed had suffered negative effects from late payment, with as many as 71 per cent saying they knew of at least one company that had gone under because of it.

A quarter said that their own survival had been threatened by late payment, which on average involves a delay of 31-60 days after the due payment date. Ninety per cent

said their debtors deliberately pay late for financial advantage. But of the 80 per cent who admitted that they themselves are also late payers, two thirds claimed their late payment was because of cashflow difficulties, with only a quarter owing up to paying late to get the benefit of holding on to money.

As many as 85 per cent were in favour of statutory interest on late payment.

## Fall in business failures

By OUR INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

**BUSINESS** failures are continuing to fall, new survey evidence from Dm & Bradstreet, the business information group, suggests.

But though the rate of failures is dropping, companies' crucial problems of cash flow have not eased. A separate D&B survey shows that eight out of ten companies say their cash flow difficulties are the same or worse than a year ago.

Business failures in England and Wales are down by more than an eighth on a year ago, according to the survey. D&B says there were 10,941 business failures in England and Wales during the first quarter of 1994.

This compares with 12,648 in the same quarter last year, marking a 13.5 per cent fall, but still means more than 840 businesses fail every week.

Company liquidations fell by 17 per cent, from 5,175 to 4,285, while the number of business bankruptcies was down by 11 per cent, from 1,473 to 1,319. The West Midlands saw the biggest decline, a fall of 29 per cent, and Wales the lowest fall at 4 per cent.

Philip Mellor, D&B senior analyst, said: "While the continuing fall in the business failure rate is encouraging, we are only just beginning to return to the early recessionary levels of 1991."

## MPs back BAe consortium plea

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

**BRITISH** Aerospace has won the backing of the Parliamentary Defence Select Committee in its battle for funding to participate in development of a new pan-European military transport plane.

Any failure by Britain to help develop the Future Large Aircraft (FLA) could prejudice BAe's place as the leading wing designer in the European aerospace industry and undermine its position in Airbus Industrie, the civil jet maker, the company has said. BAe says FLA is likely to result in development of a new generation of wing technology for large aircraft which will be applied to civil jets. Unless



Blackwell: Lockheed chief

Britain joins the FLA consortium, BAe could become just a component supplier.

In a report issued yesterday, the committee of MPs called on the Ministry of Defence to "give renewed consideration to development funding for the FLA programme". The MPs, who were examining the options for the replacement of the Royal Air Force's fleet of ageing C130K Hercules transports, endorsed the military need for early replacement of half the 61-plane fleet. Prima facie evidence reinforced the case for purchase of the updated Lockheed C130J rather than refurbishing existing planes, the MPs concluded.

But they suggested the Ministry of Defence should be wary of replacing all the planes with C130Js. "Although the Ministry does not envisage a requirement for an eventual replacement to carry outside loads, we call for careful consideration to be given to operation of a larger aircraft such as the European FLA, when the time comes to replace the second half of the fleet early in the next decade," they said.

The findings were welcomed by Lockheed Aeronautical Systems, of which Mickey Blackwell is president. The company is campaigning to win RAF endorsement as launch customer for the new Hercules derivative.

## Surge in Wilson housing profits

Wilson (Connolly) Holdings provided evidence of recovery from the deep recession gripping the housing and property markets with a 68 per cent surge in full-year profits and a confident tone on prospects for further recovery.

Pre-tax profits at the Northampton-based housebuilding and construction group jumped to £28.2 million in the year to December 31 from £16.8 million. Total turnover advanced to £274.5 million from £201.3 million.

Earnings rose to 10.2p (6.1p) a share. The total dividend is increased to 4.13p (3.93p) for the year, with an improved final payout of 2.86p (2.66p).

## Rank closure

Rank Organisation is to close its American video distribution business, Rank Retail Services America, which has made losses of more than \$75 million over four years. As a result Rank will make an exceptional closure provision in its first-half results of about \$75 million before tax, including \$10 million of goodwill already written off, the company said.

## Stena listing

Stena, Swedish owner of the Sealink ferry group, has applied for a New York listing for Stena Offshore, its wholly-owned offshore services subsidiary based at Aberdeen. Dan Sten Olsson, Stena chairman, said the family-controlled group would retain a majority holding in the offshore services company.

## Dividend up

Great Southern Group, the funeral services company, increased profits to £6.2 million before tax last year from £5.2 million in 1992 despite a £475,000 charge against a reduction in property values. Earnings were 23.1p a share, up from 22.9p, and the company is paying a final dividend of 8.2p a share, making a total of 12.2p, against 11p.

## Bridport cut

Bridport-Gundry, the rope and netting company, is reducing the interim dividend to 1.25p a share from 1.5p despite a reduction in losses to £220,000 before tax from £439,000 in the six months to end-December. Losses per share were reduced to 1.22p from 4.67p.

## Mayflower rise

Rising output of Land Rover's Discovery off-road vehicle and the benefits of a vigorous acquisition strategy helped pre-tax profits at Mayflower Corporation, the motor engineering group, multiply three-fold to £5.4 million last year. The final dividend is 0.9p a share, making 1.35p for the year, up 7.4 per cent, payable from earnings of 2.59p a share, rising from 1.23p.

## RSI 'costs £1bn'

Britain is losing more than £1 billion annually through repetitive strain injury (RSI), the upper limb disorder — most of it in costs to business — the Trades Union Congress claimed as it launched a drive to cut the burden on business, government and the taxpayer. The unions said about 200,000 people were off work every year.

## Ashley warning

Ashley Group, the ailing window-blinds group, gave warning of substantial losses for 1993. The company is to make a full provision against a deferred consideration of £20 million due from the buyer of its Spanish food-retailing interests, and £1.07 million for discontinued operations. Unaudited operating profit before interest for the year to December 31 is £3.09 million (£3.26 million).

## US tries to add extra conditions to Gatt

By COLIN NARBROUGH, WORLD TRADE CORRESPONDENT

**SENIOR** negotiators have failed to agree on the final statement for the ministerial meeting next month on the world trade agreement, with developing nations fiercely resisting a US attempt to link trade and workers' rights on the agenda for the proposed World Trade Organisation.

The dispute, likely to force the Gatt negotiators to hold fresh meetings next week, casts a shadow over the ministerial meeting in Marrakesh, Morocco, on April 12-15, called to sign the Uruguay Round accord on far freer trade.

The US demands were made last week even though negotiators agreed after the successful conclusion in December of seven years of talks not to introduce new issues

prior to the Marrakesh meeting, for fear of shattering the hard-won harmony between the 116 negotiating parties.

Gatt officials said yesterday that the negotiators had agreed on the vast bulk of issues outstanding.

Furthermore, the access offers put forward provide for global cuts in tariffs of about 40 per cent on merchandise trade, which is much deeper than the 33 per cent average initially targeted.

Mahathir Mohamad, the Malaysian prime minister who barred British firms from government contracts over critical newspaper reports, said leaders of the Group of 15 developing countries would resist if they came under pressure.

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PENSION



□ Whistle blows for British Rail □ Sir David lands in Yeovil □ Mixed day for receivers

## All aboard for the mystery tour

TONIGHT, the Government will issue tickets and blow the whistle for British Rail to start its long journey to privatisation. This stopping train is so unlikely to arrive on time that ministers have wisely avoided a fixed schedule or even too exact a route. As it rolls along, City finance, transport and engineering groups and even the public will have chances to clamber aboard. They could be profitable, but no-one knows, for this is like a mirror image of some of the early utility sales. Instead of privatising integrated monopolies such as British Telecom or British Gas and then gradually unravelling them, ministers have started with a vision of the destination and left open how to get there. The private sector can negotiate its own terms.

The most straightforward privatisations are likely to be of the three companies owning rolling stock that will be leased to train operators. These are most likely to be sold to joint ventures of banks or financial groups and manufacturers. But they will want to make sure contracts are tied up, if necessary by the franchise director insisting, to avoid being left with useless second-hand carriages.

On paper, the simplest privatisation should be of Railtrack, the monopoly that owns tracks, signalling and, in

theory, the stations. This will charge operators and, to start with, will consume about half their revenue. The Government aims for a higher return than on gas or water infrastructure, allowing lots of money to be recycled into subsidies until Railtrack is sold to the public as a steady utility. Again, it is not as simple as it looks. Railtrack will be responsible for safety and liable if leaves on the line stop trains running. It too will have to negotiate individual deals with demanding operators. It will certainly have to cut costs heavily if the whole project is to work. Yet, given its role in subsidy, Railtrack may have to stay in the public sector indefinitely.

Everything depends on subsidy deals being struck with private operators of services, putting them in a strong position. Given the risks, they will look for high returns. The favourites are consortia that include existing managers, whose enthusiasm will be tempered by their partners. They will want long-term contracts, perhaps 15 years, to guarantee subsidies and give time to exploit

station leases. For the opposite reason, the Treasury will press for the shortest possible contract, perhaps five years. In the end, taxpayers will probably shoulder most risk, either by variable subsidy or Railtrack contracts.

Only one thing is sure. Like all companies operating under price regulation, the operators will want to maximise unregulated income. Passengers can look forward to buying anything from betting slips to shares on the train. And with at least 26 different companies offering services, there should be a guaranteed new market for travel agents and timetable publishers.

### Close call for Sikorsky

NEWS OF GKN's revised cash offer of 335p for Westland appeared on the Topic screen at 8.51 am yesterday: some 16 minutes after the FT-SE 100 had registered a 40-point fall in deference to John Major's political plight. Warburg Securities, acting for GKN, were at action stations and, with Westland shares at a



discount, the 50.01 per cent hurdle was cleared by 10 am.

By the close of play, Warburg had raised the tally to 54.4 per cent: a fraction short of the 55 per cent required for GKN (taking into account the convertible aspects of Westland's capital) to go unconditional. Quite how quickly GKN goes unconditional matters not a jot, other than to United Technologies, the Transatlantic parent of Sikorsky whose £75 million sale of its 18.3 per cent stake in Westland provided GKN with its 45 per cent springboard. For United Technologies this is a matter of distinct interest because the company is entitled to any increase over its 290p sale price provided the deal is wrapped up by Easter.

All of which means that £11.7 million hangs in the balance — dependent on GKN's camp going unconditional today and completing the necessary paperwork. Sir David Lees, GKN's chairman, told *The Times*: "All our sums are based on the assumption that Sikorsky will receive the increase. That is the spirit of the deal." Indications are that it is a fine line for Sikorsky, with the Takeover Panel keeping a watchful eye.

Westland, with little to celebrate, played a straight bat. A brief bulletin noted that the offer had not been declared unconditional. Clarification will herald greater enlightenment. All of which leaves the Westland hall in the institutions' court. It is no secret that GKN is targeting 75 per cent acceptance — which triggers the second tranche of the £248 million rights issue — in order to maximise significant ACT benefits. Equally, it is no secret that four institutions could, if they choose, hurl spanners. Schroders, advisers to Westland, hold a 13 per cent interest. M&G control 9 per cent, the Pru 6 per cent and

Royal Insurance 4 per cent. Schroders, M&G and Royal were openly hostile to GKN's 290p terms and their perspective on the revised 335p (embracing Westland's special 5p dividend out of litigation proceeds) is of no small importance to GKN. A recommendation from Westland's Alan Jones would, of course, end the matter but that — like Sikorsky's £11.7 million — is not guaranteed. Doubtless, Sir David is pondering the wisdom of another tête-à-tête.

### The bailiff and the adoption service

RECEIVERS had a mixed day yesterday. Frank Field's uncharacteristic dispute with Peter Phillips reached fever pitch. The Social Security Select Committee devoted a special report to criticising Buchler Phillips' handling of the late Robert Maxwell's private estate, a mere loose end in the huge tangle that was once the Maxwell empire. Put at its harshest, the report contrasts the £1.1 million fees notched up by Buchler Phillips and solicitors

Nabarro Nathanson — at the highest hourly rates of the four insolvency appointments involved — with the £1.2 million so far indisputably recovered.

Contrast this with the bonhomie radiating round John Talbot and Murdoch McKillop of Arthur Andersen, which escaped Mr Field's ire for its role in sorting out a tricky part of the Maxwell empire. They found a buyer — admittedly the obvious one — for much of the collapsed Ferranti and are confident of finding others for the remaining non-defence businesses. The Andersen duo have also just managed to sell the last Leyland-Daf business as a going concern.

These illustrate the two main roles of insolvency practitioners: the bailiff and the social services. When companies with viable businesses collapse, the priority is to save them from closure, negotiate with creditors and suppliers and find a new parent to adopt them. Apart from banks and small business creditors, no-one worries too much how much the receivers charge or whether they extract the last penny from asset-stripping sales. When there is nothing to save, income and value for money are everything. Astute receivers realise this. Even in impossibly complex cases such as Maxwell or BCCI, there is no place for a gravy train.

## Pillar helps to support profits at Caradon

■ The City is concerned by Caradon's British building products, which failed to match those of rivals, and by the possibility of pressure on US cheque printing margins

BY SARAH BAGNALL

CARADON, the building products group, unveiled a better than expected first-time profit contribution from its £800 million building products acquisition Pillar.

Analysts were reasonably pleased by Pillar's performance but disappointed by the group's UK building products operation, which failed to match the performance of rivals. They also raised concerns over the group's cautious outlook on trading in continental Europe and its suggestion that margins at its lucrative US cheque printing operation may come under pressure. As a result, shares fell 9p to 374p.

Overall, Caradon announced a 70 per cent leap in pre-tax profits for the year to December 31 to £213.4 million. Profits were boosted by a £103 million exceptional profit from last year's sale of the stake in CarnaudMetalbox, the Anglo-French packaging group, partly offset by a £19 million loss on property disposals and asset write-downs.

Excluding these one-off items, Caradon's underlying pre-tax profits rose by 5 per cent to £192.2 million, helped by a currency gain of £10.3 million. The group is paying a final dividend of 6.08p, lifting the total by 6 pence to 8.79p (8.29p). The total dividend is being paid out of earnings, including exceptional, of 31.3p.

Daniel Cohen, finance director, said: "We want to see the dividend cover increase from 1.7 times to 2 times before we become more aggressive in our dividend payments."

Pillar, which has turnover of about £1 billion and employs 15,000 people, and Checks in the Mail, the group's other acquisition,

made a first-time contribution of £19.2 million. Peter Jensen, chief executive, said: "We are very happy with Pillar's performance, which was better than we expected."

Caradon has set aside a total of £107 million, of which £43.8 million is for reorganising Pillar with the balance for fair value adjustments and accounting adjustments at the newly-acquired company. The reorganisation will involve job losses and factory closures, said Mr Jensen.

Operating profits from UK building products rose 1 per cent to £35.4 million on the back of an 8 per cent increase in sales. European building products profits held at £18.9 million while sales moved ahead 6 per cent. Mr Jensen said the signs in the UK were right but "the next two months will be crucial" because of the April tax changes. He was more cautious about Europe.

Profits from the security printing operation Clarke America rose 15 per cent to £45.3 million on the back of a 19 per cent rise in turnover to £182 million. However, Mr Jensen said he expected pressures on prices to intensify and as a result "don't look for profits growth in this area".

The security printing market was very competitive in 1993 with the big three players, who hold about 90 per cent of the market, competing aggressively to hold onto contracts. Caradon managed to increase underlying volumes by 4 per cent but prices fell by 5 per cent. Overall, Caradon maintained margins at 24.9 per cent but this reflected cost reductions and the newly acquired Checks in the Mail business.

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Colin Archer, financial director of Higgs and Hill, left, and John Theakston, yesterday

## Higgs and Hill back in profit

BY MARTIN WALLER, DEPUTY CITY EDITOR

IN SPITE of incurring further losses at the contracting division, Higgs and Hill has returned to the black in 1993 after sharp improvements from its housebuilding and property operations.

George Duncan, chairman, said last year was a turning point in both housing and property, and it was likely 1993 would prove to be the bottom of the recession in the markets in which Higgs and Hill operates.

Pre-tax profits of £12.3 million contrasted with a loss of

£22 million in 1992, when the company charged a similar amount to cover redundancies and losses on the sale of properties. Although construction lost £2.08 million, against £2.93 million, property earned profits of £4.4 million compared with a £14.3 million loss, and housing made £2.25 million, against losses of £1.67 million.

John Theakston, the chief executive, said one achievement of the construction division over the past two years was to raise the proportion of work done on a negotiated

basis — which is generally at realistic margins — to about a quarter, as against work won by open tender that was often carried out at little better than a break-even basis.

Mr Duncan warned shareholders that, overall, 1994 was likely to be a difficult year, not least because recovery in contracting typically lagged behind general economic improvement. City analysts expect pre-tax profits of about £1.5 million-£2 million, although contracting will again turn in a loss.

## Stakis seeks £67m for acquisitions

BY MARTIN FLANAGAN

STAKIS, the hotels and casino concern, is returning to the stock market for fresh funds for the second time in 14 months via a £67 million rights issue.

The proceeds will finance acquisitions, two of which were announced yesterday — the £9.5 million purchase of the Colony Hotel in Baywater, London, and £6 million for the Airport Ambassador Hotel in Norwich.

Stakis, chaired by Sir Lewis Robertson, is offering one new share for every four held at 72p a share. The market price yesterday was 84p, down 1p. Sir Lewis said he wanted to exploit acquisition opportunities before prices increased in the economic recovery.

The Glasgow group is paying an average £72,000 a room for the 132-room Colony, and £56,000 per room for the Airport Ambassador Hotel.

Andrew Hunter, sector analyst at Hoare Govett, said the new cash call gave Stakis plenty of firepower to pursue its acquisitive tack.

In January of last year, the group launched a £28 million rights issue to cut debts as part of a refinancing.

Stakis said yesterday it had won new banking arrangements providing longer-term facilities, totalling £170 million, with four banks. There were nine previously.

In the year to October 3, 1993, Stakis bounced back into the black with pre-tax profits of £10.4 million after two years of substantial losses. The group said that, in the current year, it expected the total dividend to be at least 1.5p (1p). The latest issue has been underwritten by Schroders and Noble Grossart.

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### BANK HOLIDAY

#### BUSINESS

Easter in Business News is the time to get your personal finances in order and make peace with the taxman. But hard on the heels of Kenneth Clarke and his April tax rises come the big barriers with another unexpected cost. Tomorrow, Patricia Tolan predicts the imminent end of free banking and wonders which bank will be first to charge its current account holders even if they are in credit. And on Saturday, it is time for house hunting. On Saturday, Weekend Money has the facts for buyers and sellers. As house prices continue their gradual rise, experts say why the market is recovering. Manage your money at Easter with *The Times*.

Notice is hereby given that the 166th Annual General Meeting of the Company will be held in the Head Office, 3 George Street, Edinburgh, on Tuesday 26 April 1994 at 2.30pm.

The ordinary business of the meeting will include a resolution to appoint Price Waterhouse as auditors of the Company in place of the retiring auditors KPMG Peat Marwick. In addition to the ordinary business of the meeting, the following resolution will be proposed and, if thought fit, passed as a special resolution:

"That the regulations of the Company be and hereby are amended with effect from 27 April 1994:-

(a) by inserting after regulation 3:

"3A The provisions of subsection (2) of section 14 of the Act shall apply for the alteration, extension or modification of the objects and powers of the Company set forth in the regulations in the manner as they apply for the alteration of any other provision of the regulations; and

(b) by deleting paragraphs (2) and (3) of regulation 45 and substituting therefor:

"45(2) If the number of directors going out of office at any annual general meeting under regulation 45(1) is less than one-third of the directors for the time being, there shall also go out of office at the close, or adjournment, under regulation 18, of that meeting such other director or directors as are necessary to bring the total number of directors going out of office at that time under this regulation 45 to one-third of the directors for the time being (or, if the number of directors is not three or an integral multiple of three, the number nearest to one-third); but if there is only one director, he shall retire. References in this paragraph to directors shall not include any director who is bound to retire under regulation 48(2).

45(3) The directors to retire at each annual general meeting under paragraph (2) of this regulation shall include, so far as necessary to

obtain the number required, firstly, any director who wishes to retire and not offer himself for re-election, and secondly, those directors who have been longest in office since their last election. Two or more directors whose last election took place on the same date shall be regarded for the purposes of this regulation as having been elected alphabetically according to their respective surnames. The directors to retire under paragraph (2) of this regulation on each occasion (both as to number and identity) shall be determined by the composition of the board of directors at the close of business on the date to which the annual accounts and balance sheet laid before the annual general meeting are made up, and no director shall be required to retire, or be relieved from retiring, under paragraph (2) of this regulation by reason of any change in the number or identity of the directors after such time but before the close of the meeting."

A member entitled to attend and vote is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and, on a poll, vote in place of the member. A proxy need not be a member.

By order of the Board of Directors  
D.M. Simpson  
Secretary  
Edinburgh, 30 March 1994

Notes:  
1. Policyholders may obtain a copy of the Annual Report and Accounts, including the Agenda, by writing to the Customer Relations Department at 120 Dundas Street, Edinburgh EH3 5DY or by telephoning (031) 245 2030. Proxy forms may be similarly obtained by members entitled to vote.  
2. The effects of the special resolution are:  
(a) To clarify the means by which the objects and powers of the Company may be amended, and  
(b) To increase the number of directors who retire by rotation each year from three to one-third of the total.

STANDARD LIFE

## Senior makes acquisitions call for £67m

BY PHILIP PANGALOS

SENIOR Engineering Group accompanied a surge in full-year profits with a £67.4 million cash call to fund two international acquisitions and further develop its flexible tube and expansion joints business.

The tubing, ductwork and thermal engineering group is paying £8.4 million for Christian Berghofer, a German

manufacturer of flexible hoses and expansion joints. It is also buying Metal Bellows, a Massachusetts-based manufacturer of specialist metal bellows for the aerospace, medical and industrial markets, for £80.2 million.

Senior, where John Bell is chief executive and Terry Garthwaite the finance director, is raising £67.4 million through a one-for-four rights issue at 115p a share, underwritten by Schroders. The proceeds will be used to eliminate group borrowings after the acquisitions and leave the company with about £16 million to develop its businesses.

A strong performance from the group's North American businesses, especially Senior Flexonics, fuelled a surge in

pre-tax profits to £24.2 million in the year to December 31. This compares with £6.36 million previously when the group was hit by a £12.2 million loss on discontinued operations.

Turnover, boosted by organic growth and acquisitions, increased to £390 million (£316.6 million), with North America now accounting for about 41 per cent of the total.

Earnings leapt to 7.14p (0.98p) a share, with underlying earnings ahead to 7.1p (0.26p) a share. The total dividend is raised to 3.36p (3.15p) for the year, with an improved final payout of 2.1p (0.95p).

The shares ended the day 8½p down at 133p.



Terry Garthwaite, left, and John Bell saw surge in profits

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## ECONOMIC VIEW

# What matters is market psychology, not economics

Anatole Kaletsky  
explains why the  
fall in prices  
on Wall Street  
will reverberate  
around the world

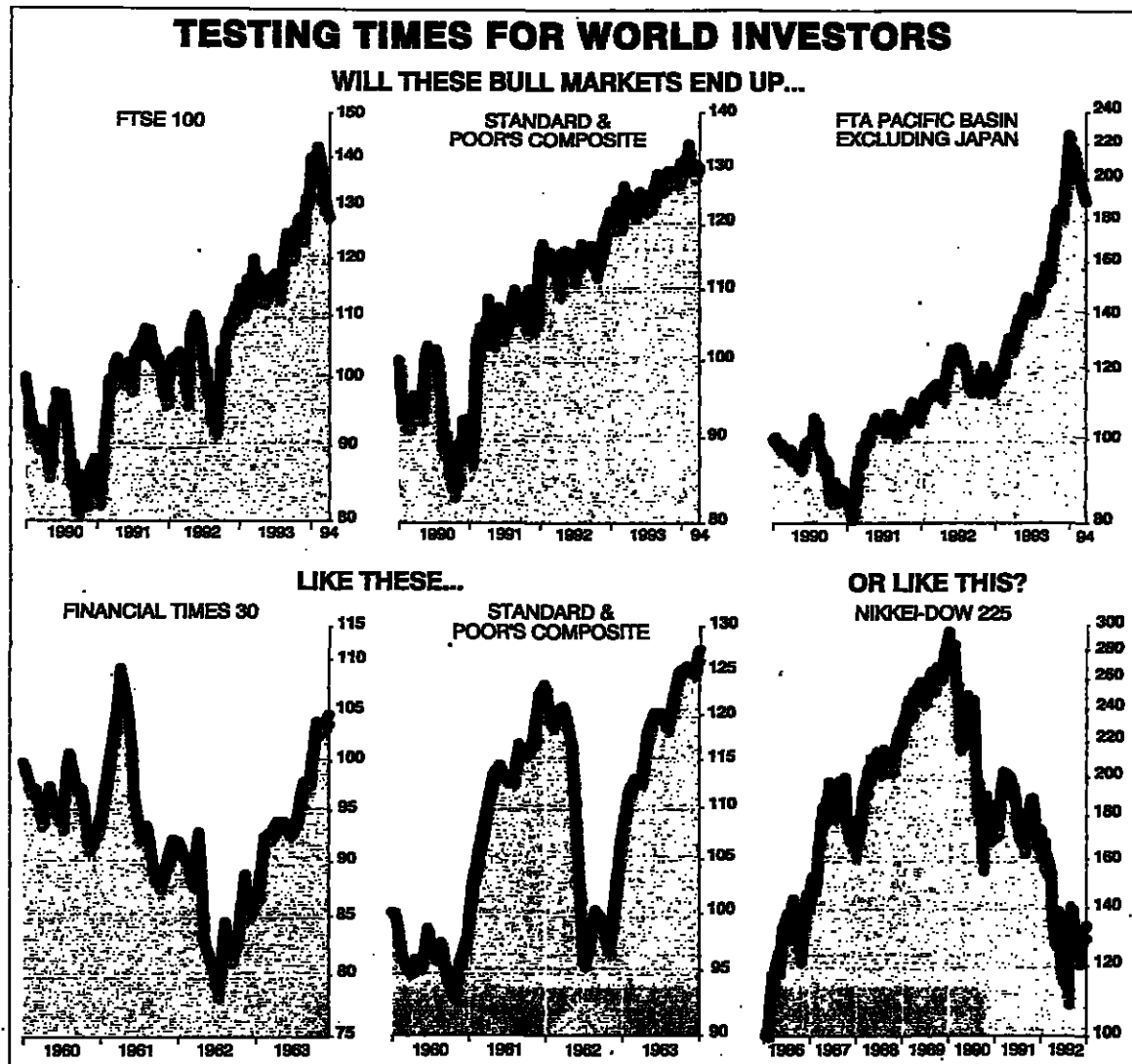
The good news in the City yesterday morning was a rumour that John Major had resigned. This story swept the dealing rooms after the BBC reported that Mr Major had summoned a group of senior ministers to Downing Street. It instantly produced a full-point surge in bond prices, stabilised sterling and reversed the slide in the stock market, which had started the day down more than 40 points. Of course, the story was untrue — but that was not the really bad news. The real problem for the financial markets today is that their present tribulations have little to do with domestic politics or any other easily remediable cause.

No doubt the City would briefly celebrate Mr Major's early resignation, just as it welcomed Margaret Thatcher's removal from office. A new Prime Minister might improve the Tories' chances in the next general election; he would at least put an end to the political uncertainty and intrigue which, on present form, seems certain to dominate the news in Britain for the next six months. But for financial markets that would be little comfort. For politics has been no more than a minor contributory factor to the sharp falls in bond and equity prices that have battered investors since the new year, or the weakness of sterling, which the City has only just begun to recognise.

To find the true causes of the present financial instability — and the best clues about how it might affect equity prices, interest rates and economic policies in the months ahead — investors must look not to Downing Street, or even to Washington or Frankfurt, but into their own minds. For what is rattling the markets, in spite of all the global rationalisations from City economists about fears of inflation, prospects of higher interest rates or the loss of credibility by the Bank of England (as if it ever had any), is actually a global phenomenon. This phenomenon has very little to do with changing economic or political conditions, either in Britain or anywhere else. What has changed since the markets reached their euphoric peak just after Christmas has not been the state of the world economy, but the psychology of the markets themselves.

With regard to long-term interest, I have already discussed this argument in previous columns, concluding that the main force behind the sell-off in world bond markets was not any change in economic conditions, but simply a return to greater realism in the assessment of long-run inflationary pressure and the worldwide balance between the supply of savings and credit demand. In the past few weeks, bond prices have continued to fall, but the focus of selling pressure has shifted from bonds to equities. Especially on Wall Street, and to some extent even in London, many investors had been hoping that stock markets would remain invulnerable, even as bond prices collapsed.

Until this week, there were plenty of hopeful American investors who believed that the global stock market correction would pass Wall Street by. The view was that long-term interest rates were being driven upwards by prospects of strong economic growth in America, possibly accompanied by somewhat higher inflation; these con-



ditions would allow American companies to earn bigger profits and therefore underpin Wall Street prices, even as bonds fell. The significance of this relatively benign outlook for American shares extended well beyond Wall Street — for American investors had been a powerful driving force behind the bull markets in Europe, Asia and Latin America. This meant that other markets were valued in relation to such indicators as the price-earnings ratio and the dividend yield on Wall Street. Thus, if Wall Street could sustain its present high valuations — extremely demanding though these were by historic standards — there would be a

**‘The chances are that prices will go on bumping downwards until they reach the point where equities are clearly too cheap’**

might well stage a temporary rebound, especially with Easter approaching and dealers reluctant to take trade. But once the holidays are over, investors will have to face up squarely to the reality they have spent the past year avoiding: markets can never move up in straight lines, even if economic conditions remain stable or benign. This is because stock market prices depend not only on economic conditions today, but also on expectations of where share prices might be tomorrow. As a result, a stable and benign economic background can easily produce a speculative bubble in which investors buy shares that have risen already to take account of improving conditions on the expectations that they will keep on rising. The question today,

of last year — just as they were about to plunge by 25 per cent.

The flaw in all such relative arguments was, of course, that the stratospheric level of such country's stock market depended on the stock markets in all other countries being sustained. Bullish investors seemed to ignore the possibility — indeed the near-certainty — that a fall in equity prices, once it started, would turn into a global downturn, even though past experience suggested that share price movements have been closely correlated in all major markets, with the one significant exception of Japan.

This optimistic view that stock markets around the world would be underpinned by stable prices on Wall Street had never been very convincing, but by the end of last week it began to look totally forlorn, as the Dow had fallen more steeply than at any time since 1929. In the next few days, stock markets around the world

therefore, is not whether the world economy is moving into a healthy period, but whether the prospects can continue to improve at the sort of rate markets have grown to expect. By the end of last year, equities had become so expensive that the answer to this question was almost certainly “no” — markets around the world had worked themselves into a self-sustaining spiral of optimism that was bound to hit a wall of disillusionment at some point. Now that the trend has turned, the chances are that prices will go on bumping downwards until they reach the point where equities are clearly too cheap.

But where might this point lie? This is where economic analysis, rather than mass psychology, become relevant again. The long-term prospects remain favourable for most countries, since the world is now at the beginning of a long upswing, rather than near the end, as it was in 1987. Looking back through history, the best parallel for the present market move is probably the very sharp correction Wall Street and London suffered in 1961-62, at the start of another long period of non-inflation growth. In that sharp correction, Wall Street fell by 25 per cent, and then rebounded almost as quickly. Shares in London, where the long-run fundamentals were rightly judged to be less promising, retreated by 30 per cent and took longer to recover. My guess is that this time the decline will be smaller — perhaps another 10 per cent or so. But that is just a guess. What is clear is that a sharp fall in the stock market is perfectly consistent with the prospect of low inflation and steady growth. Good economic prospects do assure us against the danger of a full-scale bear market such as the one in Japan since 1990. But for the most overvalued markets — such as Hong Kong, Malaysia and Mexico — a “temporary” correction might easily amount to 50 per cent.

## TEMPUS

## The Ferranti fire sale

OVER the past four years, GEC has picked the bones of Ferranti clean. When Ferranti first hit trouble, it grabbed the company's defence electronics business for a knockdown price. Like a shopper on the first day of the Harrods sale, last year, it effectively kicked Ferranti into receivership by withdrawing its penny-a-share bid, considering it too expensive. Now GEC is picking the remaining morsels off Ferranti's insolvent carcass.

By buying from the receiver, GEC circumvents many of the pitfalls that prompted it to withdraw its original bid. It is safe to assume that GEC will not need to shoulder any of the large contingent liabilities on contracts and pension liabilities that came with Ferranti when it was a going concern. This alone will make the businesses look cheap.

GEC's interest does not appear to end there.

Ferranti's most attractive asset is its stake in the sonar joint venture with Thomson. If GEC buys this it could combine its entire sonar operations with Thomson in a new market-dominant operation.

Such transactions show Lord Weinstock has lost none of his financial acumen, however impoverished Ferranti's shareholders may feel.

His game plan in the Ferranti affair also helps to explain his softly-softly approach to any joint venture with British Aerospace, since he clearly has no intention of becoming entangled in British Aerospace's aircraft finance liabilities.

The Ferranti purchases will hardly cause a ripple on GEC's £2.4 billion cash reserve. But as he has shown before, Lord Weinstock is prepared to wait until the price is right.

## Caradon

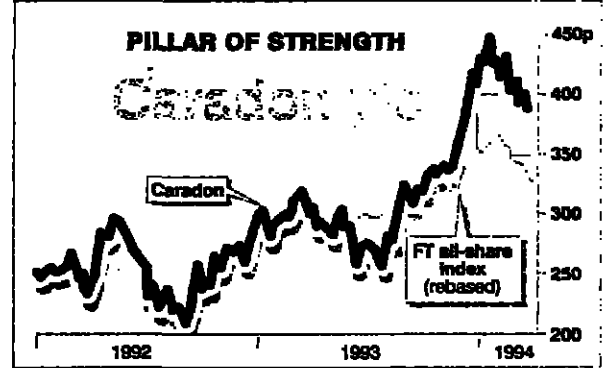
CARADON'S £809 million acquisition of Pillar was seen by many as the steal of the year, but the group has yet to show the true worth of its new property. In the last two months of the year that it became part of Caradon, Pillar turned in a £15 million profit, on sales of £214 million. That represents a return on the purchase price of 11 per cent, hardly the performance Caradon expects from the rest of its business.

Now it has completed its corporate upheavals, Caradon needs to show that it can produce real earnings growth. That should not be difficult if it can improve Pillar's 7 per cent return on sales, which is scarcely half the rate that the rest of the business produces.

It should be helped by its exposure to the economic

recovery in the US. Up to a third of Caradon's turnover will now come from North America in a full year. This should offset any lingering downturn in continental Europe, which accounts for about a tenth of sales.

The turnaround of Pillar should also be assisted by a handy £62 million reorganisation provision and £55 million in fair value adjustments, which look top-heavy considering how widely the practice of post-acquisition provisioning has now been discredited. Given the support that Caradon received from shareholders in last year's reorganisation and rights issue, however, it needs such props to show some rapid results.



## Harrisons &amp; Crofield

BILL Turcan takes over as chairman of Harrisons & Crofield in May, and the market has high expectations of the finance director's ability to shake up a one-time sleepy plantations group. Central to his strategy is, one must assume, the disposal of the East Asian plantations side, as he has indicated that this is not a sacred cow.

A flotation is the preferred move and would follow on from a similar withdrawal from Australian chemicals and timber. The attractions for Harrisons are clear, not least the reduction of a tax burden that led to the write-off of £8.5 million of unrecovered ACT last year.

Harrisons comprises a range of widely-differing industries, and 1993 saw an equally diverse flow of problems, from pressure on pet food margins to pig prices that still only allow producers to break even. There should be recovery in palm oil prices this year, but the outlook for builders' merchandising depends on consumer spending. The uncertainty is reflected in a wide range of analysts' forecasts, from £120

million to £135 million, although this last may be expecting too much from the building side. At the lower end, Harrisons sell on more than 20 times this year's earnings, but the price barely moved on the news. Investors should be grateful more was not asked for.

## Simon

ONLY the brave would put a value on a hotel these days, but for any company with a sound balance sheet and access to cash now is probably the time to buy. Having fully recovered from its near-collapse in 1991, Stakis is on the acquisition trail and shareholders are being asked to fund the deals in advance. Companies that ask shareholders to fill warehouses should be viewed with suspicion as the cash has a tendency to moulder in the bank, but in this case investors are probably safe in writing their cheques. The deals announced yesterday are a good guide to the sort of hotel Stakis intends to buy and, at £15 million, look inexpensive. It should be able to turn profits on the London hotel from £500,000 to £1 million given today's low room rate of £30.

Further deals are likely and the purchase of a portfolio from a distressed seller should not be ruled out. The shares do not look cheap at 20 times current-year earnings, but the price barely moved on the news. Investors should be grateful more was not asked for.

## BUSINESS LETTER

### Goodbye to old-style banking with no need for regrets

FROM A. H. DUNCAN  
Sir, Mr Jenkins (Business Letters, March 23) may well be mourning the loss of the old-style bank. Sadly his perspective of it was an illusion.

In the old days, the manager believed he was loved by his customers: he welcomed them with a smile and pumped their hands. As soon as the interview was over he put the charges up. It never occurred to him that the customers' friendly smile in return was really one of submission and hope, a smile they had learnt in their youth from having to go up before the headmaster.

That part of the early success of credit cards and cash dispensers was due to the fact that most customers preferred an impersonal banking service was inconceivable to the old-style manager. Customers were tired of the ignominy of being turned down by some individual who was having an off day, someone who they were likely to bump into in the high street the following day unless they could cross the street first. How much more preferable to be turned down by a credit-scoring computer.

The manager who claims to have contributed substantially to bank profits should ask himself how many propositions did he turn down which might have or did succeed with another bank. Credit scoring optimises the return to the bank, whereas a manager's judgment usually optimises his own position for when he is next considered by his superior for promotion.

Barclays has not declined, far from it. It was first to exploit the credit card and first with many other innovations. During the last few years it has made some costly mis-

takes due to old-style banking. In the last year and now under Mr Taylor's leadership [Martin Taylor, new chief executive] there are signs that changes are in hand to take the bank into the next century as one of the top few, from which both customers and

shareholders will benefit. Good luck to them and goodbye to old-style banking! Yours faithfully, A. H. DUNCAN (Retired Bank Manager), Tyndrum, Norder Heath, Corrie Castle, Dorset.

## THE TIMES CITY DIARY

### Ashanti knows who's boss

LONRHO's Tiny Rowland, 77 this year, can be thankful that in Africa they still venerate age. At Lonrho's annual meeting, four of his life-long boardroom colleagues took their first steps on the road to retirement after the meeting approved their compensation for loss of office. By sunset on Friday, Sir Peter Youens — at a month short of 78, the oldest of Tiny's colleagues — had gone. The other three are all distinctly younger than Tiny, but will have gone on their way by October 31. Rowland must, therefore, have found it galling to hear fellow joint chief executive Dieter Bock, a mere snip at 55, tell shareholders the four were bowing out because he wanted to encourage a younger generation of directors. But there is comfort for Tiny on page 125 of the prospectus of Ashanti Goldfields, the Ghanaian gold mine which Lonrho manages, and of which Tiny is a director: "No director shall vacate or be required to vacate his office as a director on, or by reason of his attaining or having attained, the age of 70 or any other age." As long as Bock's brown doesn't sweep through Ashanti with the gusto with which it is sweeping through Lonrho, Tiny looks set for many happy years of *indabas* in Africa, and he might yet blow out director's candles on his 80th birthday cake.

### Call me Bernie

BMW's chief executive officer, the urbane Bernd Pischetsrieder



der — who boasts immaculate English though like all BMW managers he eschews boasting about anything — is finding his ancient Bavarian surname is too much of a hurdle for most English speakers. And he has been meeting monoglot English speakers by the dozen since BMW began building its first car plant outside Germany. In Spartanburg, South Carolina, and since it took over the British car industry, otherwise known as the Rover group. Early side-

searching forays into the southern US states meant a name change to remain inconspicuous, so to hotel clerks across the deep South he became known as Bernie Fischer. (A false name, BMW's US chief explained, is much harder to remember if it is too far away from your actual handle.) But the problem persists. BMW's press department now tells journalists to think of him as "Bernie Fischer-Rider", which means that even the most unreconstructed English speaker from either Birmingham (Alabama or Midlands) can get closer to the German original. But, as the PR men from Munich admit with a sigh, "it would be much easier if he were called Smith".

### Golden choice

HELLO Toronto. It's been nice knowing you, London. Monarch Resources, the small gold exploration company concentrating on Venezuela, is going for a full Toronto exchange listing where it believes it will be better loved and understood by investors, and where the ratings accorded gold plays are considerably

higher. Monarch's chairman Michael Beckett, whose mining pedigree includes the great, but now disbanded, Consolidated Gold Fields group that was founded last century, agrees that "there has been a steady reduction in recent years of investor interest in smaller mining companies with a listing in London, together with declining research coverage". Ironically, this is the mining chief who has recently become a non-executive director of Ashanti Goldfields — shares in which James Capel and Morgan Grenfell are busy placing before a London stock exchange listing in April.

NIKI Lauda, former racing driver and now owner of Lauda-air, who is to pilot an inaugural flight shortly from Manchester to Vienna, was asked if he would stand for the Presidency of Austria. "Oh no! Not at all!" he replied. Asked why, he said: "If I was successful, I'd have to travel on Austrian Airlines for official business, and that would not do Lauda-air any good!"

COLIN CAMPBELL

**The State of the Music Festival**

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# US 30-year bond goes Whitewater rafting

FROM WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU  
IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Clinton may have got himself into trouble over Whitewater, but at least the American economy is sound. Or so one might have thought. That assessment may still hold in terms of the present economic performance, but there can equally be no doubt that expectations are no longer as buoyant as they once were.

Wall Street, which once reacted to the president's economic policy with unrestrained enthusiasm, is no longer so certain. Financial markets have turned hypersensitive to the prospects of rising inflation, the possibility

of further tightening by the Federal Reserve; and the uncertain political situation in Mexico.

This uncertainty is reflected most accurately in 30-year treasury bonds, the bellwether of the US bond market. For an economy with less than 3 per cent inflation, no indications of imminent or even a mid-term rise in the level of inflation, and with the certain knowledge that the Federal Reserve will yield to no one in its fight against inflation, the fall in the value of bonds is remarkable. The yield on the 30-year bond broke 7 per cent on Tuesday, more than 4 per cent above current or forecast inflation. The yield was less than 6 per

cent a few months ago, which says the bond market's nervousness about inflation has been rather sudden.

The short-term Federal funds rate rose 0.5 per cent in two instalments in the past eight weeks, but as the Federal Reserve pointed out, the rise in short-term rates did not reflect an attempt to curb excessive growth, merely a return to sustainable interest rates, which had been abnormally low during the recession and subsequent period of slow growth.

The explanation for this continued pessimism can only be that Whitewater has leaked into the bond market. True pessimists claim bond yields could surge well above 7 per

cent. In any case, serious investors can ill afford to ignore the 30-year treasury bond, which is the single largest investment security in the world. It is also a highly charged political instrument, and one of the most accurate barometers of how America feels about itself, and Wall Street's equivalent of an opinion poll.

The price of bonds primarily reflects expectations on inflation and the policies adopted by the Fed to counter it. In the case of a 30-year bond, the relevant expectations are longer term. Yet, few instruments are as sensitive to political and economic events. When the Fed signalled another interest rate rise last week, the

bond rose a whole point, suggesting the markets were content with its decision — which they had been expecting — though not necessarily now.

The public follows the 30-year bond yield keenly because it indirectly determines new mortgage rates, and its effect on housebuilding activity is swift. If long rates rise above 7 per cent, the current economy growth, in part based on booming property and house construction, could peter out. Politically, the 30-year bond is Wall Street's single most important security. It has come to be seen as a score of an administration's performance, or the president's ability to run the economy.

## Johnston Press prepares for further acquisitions

JOHNSTON Press, the regional newspaper publisher, announced a 28 per cent leap in pre-tax profits to £12.5 million last year and the proposed acquisition of the Halifax Courier newspaper group for £29.4 million.

The Halifax Courier group publishes local papers in West Yorkshire and the Isle of Man, with the *Evening Courier* in Halifax its leading daily title. Johnston publishes papers in England and Scotland, with the Yorkshire Weekly Newspaper Group representing its largest single newspaper subsidiary. The purchase is part-funded by a £7.4 million placing, at 620p, underwritten by Hill Samuel. Johnston is also paying up to £1.5 million for investment properties held by the Courier group. Johnston's final dividend is raised to 4.5p (4p), giving an increased total of 7p (6.25p).

## Moorfield seeks £12m

MOORFIELD Estates, the property group, is raising £12.2 million in a placing and open offer to shareholders to part-fund the £24 million purchase of six properties from Mobax, including North Quay Retail Park at Lowestoft. Rental income from the six properties totals £1.9 million. Moorfield is issuing 33.6 million shares at 38p and funding the balance of the purchase with a bank loan. The company, which reduced its losses from £1.9 million to 500,000 in the year to December, forecasts a 1p dividend for the current year.

## Lec reduces losses

LOSSES at Lec Refrigeration, the manufacturer of domestic refrigerators, were reduced to £838,000 before tax last year from £2.86 million in the previous 12 months. The company returned to profit in the second half as it completed withdrawal from manufacturing its own compressors, reducing costs, and had net cash of £713,000 at the year-end. Total dividend is maintained at 9p a share, with an unchanged 5p final. Losses were 9.03p a share, down from a loss of 31.98p. The shares fell 3p to 270p.

## Virtuality exceeds forecasts

By PHILIP FANGALOS

VIRTUALITY Group, the maker of virtual reality entertainment systems that joined the stock market last October with a sparkling premium, beat the forecasts made at the time of its flotation with lower than expected full-year losses.

Virtuality shares held steady at 324p, compared with a placing price of 170p at the time of flotation.

In its first figures since its stock market debut, the company reported a pre-tax loss of £365,000 in the year to December 31, compared with a forecast loss of £400,000 in the company's prospectus and a profit of £217,000 last time.

Turnover climbed to £5.4 million, from £5.25 million last time. However, excluding the effect of a significant one-off order in 1992 from a single American customer, underlying sales were ahead by more than 50 per cent.

The company has received a boost since it launched, in January, second generation products that are cheaper to manufacture. David Payne, the chairman, said they are largely responsible for a substantial boost to first-quarter sales through significant orders from new customers worldwide.

There was a loss of 1.7p a share, against earnings of 1.1p last time. As stated in the prospectus, there is no dividend.

# Co-op Bank boosted by commissions and fees

By ROBERT MILLER

THE Co-operative Bank's 81 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £17.3 million, announced yesterday, was boosted by an increase in commission and fee income of £14.6 million to £97.7 million. Bad debt provision in the year ending January 8, 1994 fell 10 per cent to £38.4 million.

Operating income for the Co-op, the UK's eighth largest bank, increased 9.4 per cent to £228 million with a 4 per cent improvement in net interest income and an 18 per cent increase in non-interest income.

The bank paid out a total of £8 million in dividends to its preference shareholders and its one equity shareholder — the Co-operative Wholesale Society.

The Co-op did, however, report a small fall in dealing profits from £3 million to £2.8 million. This goes against the trend of other recent bank results.

John Marper, the Co-op's finance director, said: "The fall was due to the fact that we dealt more in cash and derivatives rather than debt securities such as bonds and gilts." Customer deposit rose 16 per cent to £1.9 billion.

The Co-op's cost to income ratio was 75 per cent — analysts regard any figure above 70 per cent as on the high side — but this reflected the bank's investment in its Armchair Banking Service which operates 24-hours a day, 365 days a year.

The Co-op also announced a



Terry Thomas, managing director, says the bank's progress has been encouraging

revival of its famous tradition of the "divi" under a "Customers who Care" banner. This aims to raise £500,000 for charity from money spent by 700,000 customers on their credit cards.

For every £100 spent on the bank's Visa cards, 5p will go to national charities and local good causes.

Under the charity scheme, the Co-op has selected four

charities: the NSPCC, Amnesty International, the National Association of Hospice Fundraisers and Taskforce, which focuses on the plight of endangered species abroad and in the UK.

Supporters of the four charities or anyone else can help raise more money by taking out a Free for Life Gold or Robert Owen card. Both guarantee never to charge an

annual fee and customers can transfer any debt from their existing cards and pay off 5 per cent of the balance each month by direct debit.

Commenting on the results, Terry Thomas, the bank's managing director, said: "These figures are encouraging and represent substantial progress in the first full year since the worst of the recession in the early 90s."

## Hogg fall reflects profits warning

By SARAH BAGNALL  
INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

HOGG Group, the insurance broker, yesterday unveiled a well-flagged slump in pre-tax profits and halved its final dividend.

The insurer made a pre-tax profit of £6 million for the year to December 31, down £7.4 million, while the final dividend was cut from 5p to 2.25p. Profits benefited from favourable exchange-rate movements to the tune of £845,000. Hogg had issued a profits warning in January — its second in four months — so the figures were in line with market forecasts. Relief that they were not any worse lifted the shares 7p to 141p.

Profits from the group's continuing operations fell from £10.1 million to £7.2 million, reflecting a sharp drop in insurance broking profits and losses from the Lloyd's members' agency business.

Insurance broking made a profit of £7.85 million (£11.7 million) on the back of a small increase in turnover to £120.8 million. Underlying broking turnover increased 1 per cent, while underlying broking expenses rose 3.4 per cent. The members' agency lost £330,000 (£60,000 profit), reflecting lower profit commissions on the 1990 year of account.

The group said that in light of the reduced earnings from continuing activities, the board thought it prudent to reduce the annual dividend from 8.15p to 5.65p, by cutting the final dividend.

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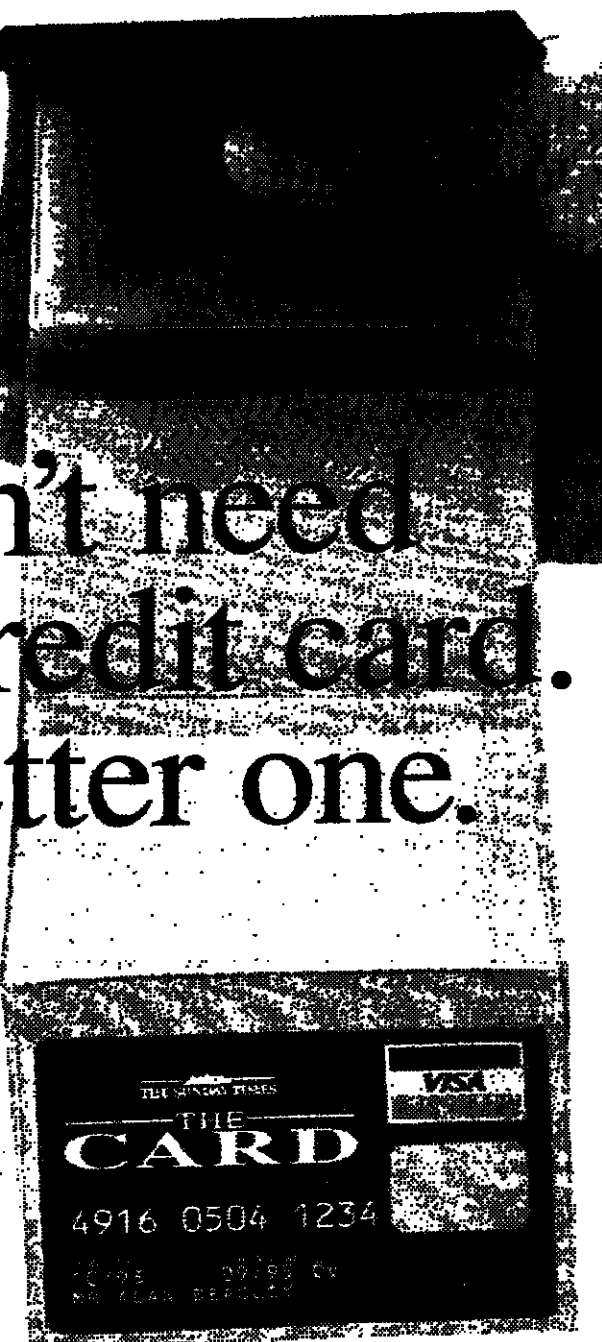
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National Westminster Bank plc Visa Card	22.4%	1.60%	£12
Midland Bank plc Mastercard	22.3%	1.595%	£12

Credit facilities are only available to persons aged 18 or over who are normally resident in the UK or Channel Islands or Isle of Man. A handling charge of 1.5% will be made on the amount of any cash advance subject to a minimum of £150. APR for cash advances is therefore 20.7%. The rate of interest, cash advance handling charge and APR may vary. Minimum monthly repayment: 5% of the outstanding balance or £5 (or the full amount due if less than £5), whichever is greater. Written questions available on request from The Sunday Times Visa Card Services, Pinnacle Business Park, Dunstable, Beds MK9 4BS.

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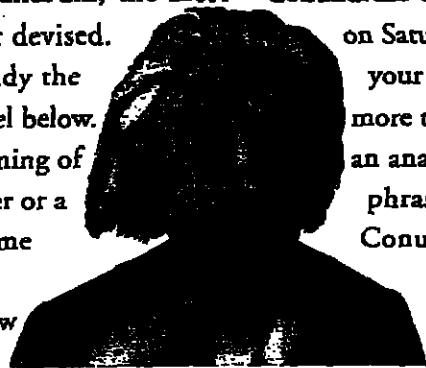
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### TODAY'S CONUNDRUM

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8th letter.

## Meggitt shares fall as warning offsets increase in profits

By MARTIN FLANAGAN

IMPROVED performance from three of Meggitt's four divisions pushed up full-year taxable profits 10 per cent at the electronics and engineering group, in spite of what management called "fluctuating market conditions".

However, the shares dipped 3.5p to 105.5p, as the company gave warning that future performance would be held back until there were signs of improvement in the aerospace market or the European process industry.

Pre-tax profits in 1993 rose to £23.3 million from £21.2 million in 1992, with sales also increasing 10 per cent to £39.7 million. A final dividend of 2.63p a share makes a total of 3.93p - up 4 per cent.

Meggitt's aerospace arm remained the main profit engine, with earnings at £13.9 million (£13.8 million), partly helped by a good performance from Meggitt Aerospace Components.

Ken Coates, the executive chairman, said the electronics division, where profits increased to £6.9 million, up from £4.4 million, showed exceptionally strong growth. The two component companies benefited from cost reductions and increased market share, he said.

Wayfarer, its systems company, kept its outright market leadership in the UK while making further progress overseas. Mr Coates predicted that the division would continue to progress this year.

Energy profits also moved



Ken Coates, right, demonstrates Meggitt's petrol payment machine with Nigel McCorkell, the managing director

ahead to £2.2 million (£1.1 million), benefiting from a high level of deliveries at good margins in the final quarter. Depressed oil prices were holding back the starting dates of some projects, said Mr Coates, but important new orders had been won in the Far East by Meggitt Fluid Controls.

There was also some evidence that industrial markets served by the energy division were slowly improving, he added.

Controls was Meggitt's one laggard division, with profits falling to £5.2 million, against £6.2 million last time, in spite

of "unexpectedly resilient" European markets. The chairman said the business was constrained by the need for restructuring, but its future performance should be supported by further forays into eastern Europe.

Mr Coates said that, overall, Meggitt had achieved significant productivity increases in 1993, and those, together with new products, put it in a strong position to hold market share. However, he indicated that any growth would appear to be more likely from exploiting new markets. Earnings per share in the latest period rose 8 per cent to 7.1p (6.6p).

## Ocean swells to £44m

By NEIL BENNETT

OCEAN Group, the freight and marine services group, staged a profits rally last year as it recovered from the cost of restructuring and losses suffered on disposals.

The figures fell short of City hopes after Hull Blyth, the group's West African shipping subsidiary, was disrupted by the civil war in Angola and could only break even. This offset growth of 15 per cent at NASS, Ocean's main airfreighting business. Profits from Ocean's freight division fell 3 per cent to £14.7 million and the shares fell 15p to 266p in response.

The group's pre-tax profits surged from £16 million to £44.1 million, although profits in 1992 were depressed by one-off costs. The underlying growth in operating profits from continuing operations was 18 per cent to £48 million. The group is holding its dividend at 14.33p for the third year in a row.

The recovery in profits was helped by Ocean's cost-cutting drive. During the year the group shed more than two thirds of its head office staff as part of a total staff cut of 500.

The main contributor to the recovery in profits came from OIF, Ocean's marine services division. Cory Environmental, the environmental division, also increased operating profits, by 10 per cent to £4.4 million.

During the year, Ocean cut its borrowings from £161 million to £94 million, thanks partly to disposals.

## Spirax-Sarco ahead

By MARTIN BARROW, CITY NEWS EDITOR

SPIRAX-SARCO Engineering, the steam and fluid controls specialist group, said order intake so far this year maintained the trend of volume growth established in the final quarter of 1993, with improving conditions in America but a decline in markets in continental Europe.

The company increased pro-

fits to £26.7 million before tax in 1993 (£24.4 million). A final dividend of 3.3p makes 9.9p (9.3p). Earnings rose to 21.6p a share from a restated 16.9p.

Profits benefited from a £2.1 million gain on currency translation, while in the previous year there was an exceptional charge of £1.3 million arising from disposals.

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## ACCOUNTANCY

## Pacioli would have approved

Michael Chamberlain says the father of modern accounting would have lauded rationalisation plans

It is now 500 years since Luca Pacioli, a Genoese monk first recorded the system of double-entry accounting in *Summa de Arithmetica*. Yet it may well have been beyond even the massed brains of the Italian Renaissance fully to comprehend and document the structure of the 20th century accountancy profession in the UK and Ireland.

Six separate main bodies, four different member titles, an admixture of co-operation, collaboration and competition in a variety of forms — no wonder other Europeans and those from more distant parts sometimes appear confused when faced with an accountant from these islands.

For a long time, the ICAEW Council has seen the restructuring of the profession as one of its most important objectives. It believes the present structure serves neither the public nor the members, regardless of the accountancy body to which they belong.

Research among members of the six bodies has shown this view is shared generally.

Against a background of tension between the bodies as competition has intensified, a Working Party Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies (CCAB), chaired by David Bishop, a past-president of ACCA and a partner in KPMG Peat Marwick, has been re-examining the possibility of fundamental restructuring of the profession. Given the unsuccessful attempts, in 1970, 1989, and 1990 to bring all or some of the bodies together, why bother again?

First and most important, the public reputation of accountants has been tarnished, deservedly or otherwise, in recent years as a result of business failures. Yet, in the end, the prosperity of accountants depends on their reputation. They deserve a structure for the professional bodies which strengthens, not weakens, that reputation.

Second, as decision-taking

moves inexorably towards the centre, whether Whitehall and its agencies or Brussels, it is becoming ever more important that the profession should speak with a stronger, clearer voice on matters affecting it — enhancement of professional standards, regulation, the 'expectation gap' — as well as influencing matters of policy.

Third, the profession needs to remain attractive to potential recruits in the face of a predicted oversupply of accountants under the current structure. Internal competition, particularly for students, is affecting relationships between the bodies and, already having adverse effects for the profession as a whole.

Fourth, economies of scale would help to deliver improved, cost-effective services, and petty in-fighting between the various bodies would ease. To respond to these and other concerns, the Bishop Working Party has prepared a



Summa the parts: Michael Chamberlain gives Pacioli a lesson

number of principles as a model for restructuring for discussion by the members of the bodies during the next few months. This is predicated on the merger of the six existing bodies into three new bodies in London, Edinburgh and Dub-

lin. These would each be an 'Institute of Chartered Accountants' and members would be called 'chartered accountants' with the same designatory letters. There would be common entry, education, training and assessment standards but some differentiation of syllabus and assessment methods for different markets. The ICAEW sees this model as the best solution available now and for the future. The next stage is to see whether the membership is prepared to give enough support for more detailed work on it.

Michael Chamberlain is president of the ICAEW

## Double dilemma on the road to change

THE UK's accountants now face an acute dilemma. As one of their leaders put it to me this week: "The problem is trying to guess how this thing will turn out". The "this thing" being referred to was the plan to restructure the profession. Or to be more precise, the plans. For there are now a number of methods whereby this reduction from the six existing accounting bodies could be achieved.

The dilemma for the leaders of the profession is tipping the likely winner and for their members deciding how far to pursue change. The straight answer is that in politics, for that is what this is, people rarely manage to tip the winner. And ordinary members of a profession are very unlikely to vote for change. Last week's press conference to unveil the plans to the profession would have done little to convince them. The problem is that every question has several answers. And it is still very hard to see a serious incontrovertible reason or motive to answer the question "why now?". Much play has been made of how the Government would prefer to hear the views of the profession as one voice. Michael Heseltine started everyone by backing this view with not so much an off-the-cuff as off the back of a scribbled napkin speech at the recent celebratory 75th anniversary dinner of CIMA, the management accounting body.

But, as became apparent at last week's press conference, the amalgamation of the professional bodies need not create this. There would be some sort of divisional structure based on different strands of accounting career. And inevitably if something, for example, on the public sector side needed comment, the representation would

come from the specialist board rather than the central council.

The accounting bodies now face considerable uncertainty as they communicate with their members. David Bishop, who probably now regrets attaching his name to the report which promulgates the changes, said that the process would be one of harmonisation this autumn, followed by a full restructuring taking three to four years. All the bodies will now send

position statements, imploring letters, or blocks of rock-solid logic to their members. The problem is that some of them do not know what their members want. The certified accountants, for example, were startled at some research which suggested their members would be very happy to jettison their structure, headquarters building and considerable investment portfolio in return for being able to call themselves chartered accountants. This is not what more socially-conscious certified accountants are supposed to do. Equally members of the English ICA are going to have to give up their exclusive rights to the title of

chartered accountant. As its council paper puts it: "Unless the need to share the title is accepted, we see no prospect of achieving agreement with the other accountancy bodies." The difficulty here is that when market research was carried out last year the figure for English ICA members who said they were prepared to share the title was under 30 per cent. It is going to take an enormous amount of encouragement, persuasion and manipulation of opinion polls to lift that figure to the two-thirds majority which will eventually be required.



ROBERT BRUCE

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ing contribution in any field.

A FIRM of accountants in Palmers Green, North London, is called John Crook and Partners. Probably brings a very curl to the tip of the Inland Revenue as the tax return season approaches.

JON ASHWORTH

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# OPERA page 38

Mexican treasure: an exciting new composer shows his mettle with an acclaimed US premiere

# ARTS

# THEATRE page 39

With John Hurt in a superb cast, A Month in the Country proves to be time well-spent



Embryonic musical genius John Lennon (Ian Hart, left) trying to convince talented painter Stuart Sutcliffe (Stephen Dorff) that he can also play bass guitar (foreground)

CINEMA: Geoff Brown on a bouncy tribute to Beatle Stuart Sutcliffe ...

## Before they was Fab

The producers Stephen Woolley and Nik Powell have a knack of digging out stories from British culture with high cinematic potential. As over-lords of Palace Pictures, they resurrected the Profumo affair in *Scandal*. Now, with their new company Scala Productions, they have pounced on the "fifth Beatle", Stuart Sutcliffe, who played bass guitar during the group's wild months in Hamburg in 1960.

Backbeat, proficiently directed by newcomer Iain Softley, tells Sutcliffe's story with enough visual bounce and toe-tapping music to put happy smiles on most audiences' faces. Sutcliffe, a promising art student, is Lennon's best friend. His musical gifts appear slight, but he looks good on stage at the Reeperbahn clubs: cool and disdainful behind dark glasses, the James Dean of rock 'n' roll.

Then he meets Astrid Kirchherr, bohemian luminary and photographer, and is lured into her life. They read Rimbaud, watch Cocteau movies, hang out at the existentialist's watering hole, the Bar Esmer. Paul McCartney — ruthless behind that baby face — mutters about getting Sutcliffe replaced. So, in the plangent words of the movie poster, "he had to choose between his best friend, the woman he loved, and the greatest rock 'n' roll band in the world".

There is one large problem. Lennon is the dominant force, but not the leading character. Ian Hart (repeating his role from Christopher Münch's *The Hours and the Times*)

gets the best lines, the best chances to mould a complex personality. You sit up, ears cocked, when Lennon enters, even if he only unleashes rude words in a Scouse accent strong enough to strip paint.

Sutcliffe, by contrast, stays in the shadows. This is no criticism of America's Stephen Dorff, who skilfully conveys (with a light Liverpudlian twang) whatever the script offers. But Sutcliffe is presented almost as a brooding dilettante, a talent adrift while Lennon and the Beatles forge ahead towards stardom.

Still, this dramatic imbal-

ance never proves fatal. Surrounding characters keep the film bubbling, from the enigmatic Kirchherr of Sheryl Lee (Laura Palmer in *Twin Peaks*) to the cluster of embryonic Beatles, played by actors cast for their personality more than any physical resemblance.

What finally makes *Backbeat* a success, apart from the rousing music recreated on the soundtrack, is its lively evocation of a time, a place, and an artistic ambience. Before your very eyes, five Liverpool rock 'n' rollers turn into four mop-topped Beatles, and history is made.

**Backbeat**  
Odeon West End  
15, 100 mins  
Bouncy tale of the fifth Beatle, Stuart Sutcliffe

**Belle Epoque**  
Curzon Mayfair  
15, 108 mins  
Bucolic, flimsy Spanish Oscar-winner

**The Scent of Green Papaya**  
Renoir, U. 100 mins  
Visually exquisite drama about a Saigon servant girl

**Kalifornia**  
MGM Haymarket  
18, 118 mins  
Hollow and horrible road movie

**The Thing Called Love**  
National Film Theatre  
15, 116 mins  
River Phoenix's last, underpowered film

**Grief**  
ICA Cinema, 87 mins  
Modest, amusing gay comedy

... and the sunny sex of the Oscar-winning *Belle Epoque*

One of the regular pre-Oscar events is the squabble over the nominations for the Best Foreign Language Film, although since the Motion Picture Academy generally chooses the wrong winner, a cynic might question why anyone gets hot under the collar. This year, outsiders agreed the front runner was Chen Kaige's *Farewell My Concubine*, a melodrama of Chinese Opera and history, full of fire and colour. The winner, however, was *Belle Epoque*, a bucolic, sun-kissed Spanish tale of a young army deserter in 1931: a film as small, strokeable and eager to please as a puppy.

From the moment the hero Fernando gazes in wonder at four beautiful sisters stepping off a train, we know more or less what to expect. Bed-hopping. Period accoutrements. Hot, lazy days. A film that looks good, but lacks spine or teeth.

The director Fernando Trueba keeps the screen filled with flimsy attractions and characters from *Never-Neer Land*. Escaping the clutches of two Civil Guards, the young hero (Jorge Sanz) shelters in the country mansion of an artist and libertine (Fernando Fernán Gómez). He is about to leave when the daughters — one virgin, one lesbian, one

widow, one sexpot — puff into view. He stays, of course, and is happily seduced.

Spain's political conflicts rumble faintly in the background, but only as period flavouring. For nothing much matters in *Belle Epoque* except the gentle cavorting under sunny skies.

The most exotic candidate for this year's Foreign Language Oscar was *The Scent of Green Papaya*, a ravishing French-Vietnamese production first unveiled at Cannes last year. No one expected this to grab a statuette, for it probably takes a specialist audience to appreciate debut director Tran Anh Hung's

sinuous camera movements, the extraordinary French studio set, or the extreme close-ups that lift mundane actions — a finger touching the seeds inside a unripe papaya — into the realm of metaphor.

Not that the film, cast with effective amateur actors, ever appears just a technical showpiece. The subject is a peasant girl's steps to fulfilment and love, working in service in Saigon in the 1950s and early 1960s. Each domestic ritual inks in more of the picture. Each tracking shot through the labyrinth of streets and rooms suggests the flow of life in a house teeming with ornaments, creeping lizards and mouth-watering food.

The outside world, and the war with France, impedes only occasionally. This is mainly a story of one woman's personal growth within a life of servitude; and Tran, trained in France after leaving Vietnam at the age of 12, captures it all with astonishing skill. He is a name to be watched.

After the experience of *Kalifornia*, however, few sane people should rush to see another film directed by Dominic Sena. He hails from the music video and commercials field; you can tell by the staccato pacing, the lashings of camera artifice. The style is annoying enough when applied to something bland. Poured over a show-off script about a cross-country tour of murder sites with a hillbilly killer in tow, the result is bad enough to cause deep depression.

Brad Pitt and Juliette Lewis dominate the unlikely passengers of a 1961 Lincoln. As they too along the tarmac, films like *Badlands* jump to mind. But this is one nasty, narcissistic road movie that travels nowhere.

Despite containing River Phoenix's last film performance, *The Thing Called Love*, directed by Peter Bogdanovich, has been released straight to video in Britain. Now the National Film Theatre has given it a home for one week. Although far from a disaster, one can see why the film was not pounced upon: the tangled tale of young country singers seeking fame in Nashville idles along, and proves 20 minutes too long.

Finally, Richard Glatzer's gay comedy *Grief*. This American independent film may be technically impoverished, but the behind-the-scenes peep at a tacky television series offers good lines, genuinely tender moments, and characters treated with respect. Straight, mainstream Hollywood should be so lucky.



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THEATRE: Helen Mirren and John Hurt in stunning form; Sue Townsend less successful adapting her best-seller

# Magnificent in all moods

Benedict Nightingale reviews the new production of Turgenev's *A Month in the Country* at the Albery

Helen Mirren has made quite a name for herself on television as a police detective battling to suppress her sexuality and natural femininity in a tough male world. She performs that task superbly, as she does most things; but it must make the role of Natalya Petrovna, who falls in love with her son's tutor, seem remarkably liberating to her. Certainly, there are moments in *A Month in the Country* when you feel that all her emotional aspects, heart to stomach to the less mentionable glands, are overwhelming the parts above the neck.

It is an extraordinary performance and maybe even a great one: tense and feeling, yet intelligent, sharp and humorous as well. It is also the centre of a production that, thanks to Bill Bryden's skills in the casting and directing departments, has enough all-round strength to sweep away the customary objections to Turgenev's play.

Chekhov declared it "not at all to my taste", on the face of it a perverse, unflattering judgment, since it has pre-echoed the fate of the plays he was to write 50 years later. Retainers, landowners and other representatives of the outcast drift in and out, many of them exuding rural Russia's mandatory boredom and ennui. In Rakhitin, Natalya's long-time admirer and acolyte, we get one of those ineffective middle-aged swains who were regularly to meander through Chekhov's work with capes, canes and sunken cheeks. We even have a doctor whose all-purpose cynicism extends to his own medical skills, rather as in *The Three Sisters*.

The tone is proto-Chekhovian, too: funny and touching and sometimes both at once.

Yet there are times when Turgenev's dramatic limitations are evident. The play is long, wordy and a bit repetitive. Emotion is out-front, often spelt out in monologues rather than shown in subtler, sub-textual ways. You sometimes get the feeling that a brilliant psychologist — and Turgenev's understanding of Natalya's shifting emotions would qualify him for a consultancy on Harley Street tomorrow — is working in a

She could not be more natural in her switch from pain to hope?

form he has yet to master. In the theatre, *A Month in the Country* can seem like a novel in prose.

But not here, not this time. Bryden's production is simply staged, in and around a roughly timbered house and against a background of endless birch trees; and it is played with freshness and immediacy. There is only one misjudged performance, and even it is enjoyable. John Standing is too genial an actor for a doctor who conceals bitterness and spite beneath an affable eccentricity. Timothy West, radiating sly-eyed malice, glee and self-contempt, got the character's number better in the Chichester production of 1974. Standing shouts and splutters, but is still too abrupt a jump from Jekyll to Hyde.

Never mind. John Hurt, looking like a ravaged bum-

ble-bee in his yellow-and-black jacket, catches not only Rakhitin's ironic exhaustion but the sadness of the lower unloved. Joseph Fiennes brings a callow bashfulness to the tutor, Clem Crutcher a flummoxed decency to the role of Natalya's husband, and Anna Livia Ryan spirit and vulnerability to her ward, Vera. But it is the woman who plays games with all of them, and even more devious ones with herself, who holds the stage.

There are few more contradictory characters in drama than Natalya. She is a jealous monster, treacherous enough to lure Vera into an admission of love for the tutor and then marry her off to an elderly goon, and the most hapless of Eros's victims. She refuses to acknowledge her feelings, faces them, renounces them, embraces them, denies them, tries to fulfil them; and sometimes, it seems, within a few sentences. All this Mirren manages, plus fear of ageing, self-mockery and a girliness simultaneously sweet and deeply embarrassing.

There are times when she engineers tricky transitions so adroitly that only fear of missing the next sly twist stopped me cheering. I have not space to talk you through the monologue in which Natalya imagines Vera and the tutor in each other's arms. Take my word that she stands there, alone and exposed and obliged to use a superannuated form of dramatic address; and yet she could not be more natural in her switches from pain to sly calculation to rapture to self-loathing to hope to despair.

We in the audience laughed, and it did not matter. We were touched, and that was good, too. We all knew we were watching a major actress in her prime.



Turgenev, a brilliant psychologist not quite at ease on the stage, is made highly effective at the Albery Theatre, where Helen Mirren, Joseph Fiennes and John Hurt star in *A Month in the Country*. Drawing by Bill Hewison

## We are not amused

The Queen and I Leicester Haymarket

At the Nottingham Playhouse, *Pygmalion's* Pearly Queen Eliza Doolittle is learning to enunciate "how do you do?" as if she has sucked on a silver spoon from birth. In nearby Leicester, Queen Elizabeth II is living in a council house on the poverty line, learning to make do and make friends. The Queen is starting to sound positively common in Sue Townsend's theatrically dismal reworking of her best-selling book, "Have you, as they say on the estate, done a runner?" Her Majesty (Pam Ferris) asks the Prince of Wales, who was serving time for assaulting a copper.

While Shaw's Eliza is climbing out of the gutter in Covent Garden, our beloved monarch is grubbing around for discarded cabbages and King Edward potatoes after the market closes. Yet these two playwrights are not worlds apart: both are concerned about the class system, and couch politics in comedy.

Unfortunately, *The Queen and I* has lost all sophistication en route to the stage. The adaptation, for Max Stafford-Clark's new company Out of Joint, is lopsided. The socialist Prime Minister who turns the royal family out of Buckingham Palace is absent. Townsend's original prose is delightfully subtle compared with the crass sexual innuendoes and didacticism of her dramatic dialogue.

Gillian Hanna's Queen Mother is patently an impostor. Doon Mackdichan is a dead ringer for the Princess of Wales but only Toby Salaman (Prince Charles) has really conquered royal mannerisms, with his mouth, strained lengthways and his eyebrows shutting up and down.

Generally, however, the cast seem happier as commoners: Amelia Bullmore flicking between stilted slagginess and a sloppily-jumped social worker; Paul J. Medford absurdly holding conversations with himself as Fitzroy and his Jamaican mother.

Stafford-Clark's production aims to be theatre for the people. But need that entail swinging between crudeness and sentimentality? The songs about domestic violence and riots by Mickey Gallagher and Ian Dury are direly clumsy. Still, the closing couplet at least asks a practical political question: "So citizens over to you/What are we going to do?"

KATE BASSETT

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TELEVISION REVIEW: No message in a tale of gentle innocents abroad in racist London

It was like Hardy without the pay-offs, last night's Screen Two: *O Mary This London*, written by Shane Connaughton. Three simple Dublin teenagers — big strong Mickey (Jason Barry), little illiterate Bimbo (Dylan Tighe) and a sullen wench called Mary (Oha Seagrave) — travel to London to procure an abortion and mine the streets for gold. But fate keeps intervening, separating Mary from the boys and giving each of them bizarre situations from which to wriggle free.

A thought strikes me. It wasn't supposed to be funny, was it? Certainly their encounters with crackpots, racists, dangerous majors and repeated industrial injury would be a roundly ridiculous catalogue if you were only in the mood for a laugh.

What was peculiar about *O Mary This London* was the bewildering absence of a political message, or indeed any

## Casting the Irish in a rather dim light

message at all. Despite the themes of London homelessness and exploitative cheap labour, there was nothing of the passion of Al Ashton's searing *Safe* (the film starring Kate Hardie shown last year) nor of Ken Loach's *Riff-Raff*. At every sign of trouble, the two boys just ran off, sometimes laughing ("You're a posh bottle!" "No, yew are a posh bottle!"), none of their actions had repercussions, not even their audacious robbery of a payroll ("A thousand brick!") or the stabbing of a "cockney" in a street brawl.

I mean, what do you make of it? Bimbo, pursued across rooftops by a thug with a

serious cleaver, makes his escape, not down the scaffolding favoured by his friend, but inside one of those chutes used for builders' rubble, thereby alighting with some force in a rubbish skip. A down-and-out pops his head up; Bimbo has landed on him. "No trouble, son," the tramp says. "All shipshape." A shade of Beckett floors pass, and the viewer shrugs and carries on.

The trouble was, Bimbo thought he was the father of the baby, when it was probably Mickey's. Then Mary threw herself in the Thames after the abortion, which made Mickey assume she was dead, whereas she was only improv-

ably muddy all over (the tide was out); so Mickey didn't tell Bimbo, either about the sex or the supposed drowning (can you follow this?), and the weight of such multiple deceit finally did his head in, and made him stab someone.

Out of all these assorted larks emerged a very enjoyable — and beautifully acted — relationship between the big protective skinhead and the trusting, accident-prone Bimbo, culminating in Bimbo's inevitable death on a rainy building site, in a quite spectacular accident involving a burst embankment. But in terms of dramatic genre, *O Mary This London* fell be-

tween more stools than Dickie Henderson.

To my mind, the least probable aspect in this whole gallimaufry was the prejudice the Dubliners met at every turn. "Can you tell me the way to Shar-lot-ie Street?" asks Mickey of a policeman. "Why don't you piss off back to Ireland?" is the reply. "Can you spare me some money, for the fare back to Ireland?" Mary asks a man, later on. "A noble cause," he sneers, "if we can believe you."

Doubtless Irish readers will confirm the authenticity of all this, and say it is healthy for English people to see themselves as mick-hating maniacs. But if we are talking racist stereotypes, isn't it a bit cheeky to expect a few Dublin accents ("You're tick!") to deliver a Roddy Doyle feelgood factor without the support of some decent jokes?

LYNNE TRUSS

CONCERT: Mysterious music played with confident expertise

## Strangely sublime Sibelius

LSO/Davis  
Barbican Hall



Colin Davis: a musician unconcerned with image

Sir Colin Davis's ever more frequent appearances in his current role of principal guest conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra are making LSO concerts as worth hearing as they have ever been. Here, in a concert devoted to Beethoven and one of Davis's specialities, Sibelius, he showed again why he is the right man for the principal conductor's job which he assumes in the autumn of 1995.

Davis is unconcerned with image-making, either for himself or for the band. He simply conducts the music as best he can, which is never less than very well indeed, and ensures that the LSO plays it in like manner.

Such a musician can with confidence begin a concert, as he did on Sunday night, with Sibelius at his most restrained and disturbing. The gorgeous little three-movement suite for strings, timpani and triangle, *Rakastava*, was a friendly enough introduction, and it was presented exquisitely here.

Full marks were deserved for the lightness and control of the scherzo, "The Way of the Lover", and the performance was crowned by a finale, "Goodnight-Farewell!" to which Moray Welsh's cello

contributed tellingly lyrical solos.

What followed was that strange yet strangely powerful masterpiece, the Fourth Symphony. Nobody understands this elusive work's mysteries, its starkly understated psychological undercurrents, better than Davis.

From its opening tritonal growlings it radiates immense foreboding. It contains all the

emotions of the primal scream, yet those emotions are strictly controlled: there is no eruption into any expressionistic nightmare here, but neither is anything sublimated. Fears of isolation, of death, of fear itself, Sibelius says, have to be faced and tolerated. There is no triumph in this reconciliation, as the abrupt, blandly repeated chords of the finale's close tell us.

If music's purpose is to tell us more about ourselves, this powerful symphony certainly succeeded in that on this occasion. Davis's performance, so carefully paced and balanced in rare moments of sunlight as well as in the darker, bleaker regions, proved the ideal messenger.

After the interval Radu Lupu joined the orchestra for the more extrovert heroics of Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto. Though not all went perfectly for him — no many tiny infelicities and a sometimes over-brittle sound — his was a strong vision graced by a beautifully poetic slow movement and a finale whose wisely moderate speed allowed this adventurous rondo to elevate itself for once above the merely coarsely rollicking.

STEPHEN PETTITT

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# Monster with magnetism

Hugh Thomas marvels at the survival of Cuba's tyrant whose charm is matched by his cruelty



Fidel Castro announces the predictable 98 per cent turnout in the elections of February last year

and which ruined thousands of lives. Quirk gives a sensible, no-nonsense picture of the character of the small-scale, amateur but astonishingly successful campaign in the Sierra Maestra.

Quite rightly, Quirk draws attention to Castro's tell-tale visit, just after he reached power, to Komu Betancourt, president-elect of Venezuela. According to Betancourt, Castro asked for a loan to finance a challenge to the United States. Betancourt said he had no money to lend, and anyway what was the point of a gratuitous challenge to the United States? The story shows how anti-Americanism always provided the real thrust of Castro's politics, as it has been of those who supported (and support) him.

It also reminds us that the supposition that Castro was driven by Eisenhower's administration into the arms of the Russians is nonsense — as I think Castro himself would be the first to admit. But that interpretation is so deeply rooted that it appears impossible to destroy. Even Quirk's intelligent account of the famous visit of Castro to the United States in April

1959 as a guest of the newspaper editors will probably be inadequate to destroy a well-established myth.

Primary material for the post 1959 era, and particularly post 1962, is difficult to come by. The section of Quirk's book dealing with Castro in power is therefore less interesting, for it depends a great deal on newspaper evidence. There is, however, much useful analysis of the sufferings of political prisoners: among them Pedro Boitel, who died in prison in the late 1960s. His "crime" was to have won the student elections in Havana in 1960 — the only true election since Castro has been in power. It is also salutary to hear again of the sufferings of the unfortunate author Padilla, even if much of the documentation is taken from his own book.

I am glad to be reminded that Castro, in one of those terrifying personal conversations which he likes to have with victims of his persecutions, told Padilla that my own books on the Spanish civil war and the Cuban revolution were "full of mistakes". Good to know that he read them, even if they have not been available in the bookshops of his tragic country — where despite everything, I suspect, such forgotten heroes as Boitel will, within ten years, give their names to great avenues, leafy parks and splendid plazas.

Castro is a magical person: Jean-Paul Sartre, stately *New York Times* journalists, television reporters who terrify their own people, all fall for him. Power is part of the explanation. But the magnetism was also the reason why he got to power and has held it for so long.

The thing has happened before. At Yalta, Churchill kept saying of Stalin "I like that man." But Churchill, the anti-Bolshevik of the 1920s, knew all about Stalin's brutalities. The visits of Lloyd George and of Toynbee to Hitler (for example) were

**FIDEL CASTRO**  
By Robert E. Quirk  
Norman, £25

discreditable. But which of us would have done better if we had been introduced to Caligula? Castro is the most remarkable of all these magnetic monsters, for he has lasted so long. In his early thirties, he converted a nationalist, humanist and democratic movement, into a Communist one. Now in his sixties he is trying to achieve a limited market economy, with private foreign (especially European) investment. It is possible that, due to his advertising skills as well as the gullibility of those to whom he talks, that he will survive this reversal of policy.

There have been several lives of Castro: Tad Szulc had interesting new material but his own opinions

were muddled. George Anne Geyer's life was very lively, but was ill-balanced and she gave no references for her often fascinating stories. Now Professor Robert Quirk, of the University of Indiana, has written a biography which is low key and undramatic, is methodical, serious and readable. Though there are few judgments and no conclusions, it is the best book on the subject. The absence of a conclusion is no doubt appropriate for a regime whose future is unclear. Quirk's previous books have been about Mexico. That has helped him to see Cuba in appropriate perspective.

Quirk's best section is where he describes Castro's background and early life. He has gone to endless trouble to trace or reject the source of every rumour and anecdote, about the curious family of the Castros, at once rich and uncultivated, in the rural east of Cuba. Castro's indulgent father, a first generation immigrant from Spanish Galicia, who fought for

Spain against Cuban rebels in the 1890s, is the key to this part, and to the whole biography.

The chapters about Castro's first sallies in politics are also full of new insights, though more about the political gangsterism of the

University of Havana in the late 1940s (in which as a student Castro participated) would have been welcome. Castro's rebellion against Batista in 1956-58 was as much public relations as military campaign. That did not prevent

thousands of young, idealistic Latin American revolutionaries thinking that Castro's triumph showed that "the armed struggle" was the way to power; a misconception as great as Columbus's in thinking that America was India,

has spoiled him and he speaks no German, "otherwise he is a Frenchman, drinks wine only with water, and eats stewed fruit".

A pantheon of other 19th-century figures pop up from time to time — Moscheles, Thalberg, Gade — and a host of others who wrote pretty ghastly music according to Clara. She was a redoubtable lady and an astute musician, but there's not a scrap of humour to keep the diary spinning along.

Clara's account of the Russian trip is quite disappointing, apart from occasional beams of detail on life in Moscow which sounds literally uncomfortable beyond belief. It sometimes reads more like Jennifer's Diary. In fact Robert, while writing rather bad poetry and sitting sketching in the Kremlin, was ill and depressed.

Though the diaries form a valuable piece of the incomplete jigsaw of Schumann documents available in English, more explanation (one is constantly referring to notes and *dramatis personae*), might have added a missing dimension.

## Scenes from a musical union

Amanda Holden

**THE MARRIAGE DIARIES OF ROBERT AND CLARA SCHUMANN**

Edited by Gerd Nauhaus  
Robson, £22.95



Clara: concert pianist and the mother of eight

was), Clara often doesn't dare practise for fear of disturbing his composing. They study music together, starting with Bach's 48 preludes and fugues and going on to Beethoven sonatas. Robert says "I don't like to write or speak about my own works" — more's the pity

for us. Then there are the friends; Mendelssohn is much in evidence, as player, conductor and godfather to their first daughter. Liszt too makes the occasional dashing appearance. Clara loves his playing but hates his music. She dislikes Wagner "a man who never stops talking about himself... and constantly laughs in a whining tone".

Robert's descriptions are more succinct, but often the more interesting. He describes Berlioz as a genius, but also bemoans the fact that Paris

## A discreet nationalist takes a train

Anatol Lieven

**PROFESSOR MARTENS' DEPARTURE**

By Jaan Kross  
Harvill, £15.99

or rather the Soviet past, for it was written in 1984. Its hero, Friedrich Martens, was a real figure, an international jurist and senior Russian foreign ministry official in the last decades of the Tsars.

Most historians have assumed that Martens was a Baltic German, not the Estonian that Kross makes him out to be. One of the themes of the novel is precisely how in order to pursue his career, Martens has had to abandon his Estonian national identity and pretend to be either German or Russian.

In return for this, he does indeed rise in the world, but is still never allowed to make it right to the top; and his rise involves an endless series of

petty compromises with the stupid apes who rule the Russian empire. Kross does not make much secret of his contempt for Russians.

It is not difficult to see in this an image of the fate of Estonian intellectuals like Kross under Soviet rule. Even more than in other republics, the Estonian way was to try to preserve national culture and interests by bowing — albeit as slightly as possible — before the prevailing Soviet wind. Kross's own apparent discomfort at this is reflected in the problems of his hero.

Unfortunately, the dead hand of Soviet cultural influence was not without its effects on Estonian literature and in this case on the writing of *Professor Martens' Departure*. Frankly, being shut up in a train compartment for 295 pages with an elderly, garrulous and rather embittered professor of international law, would not be everybody's idea of bliss, even if the professor did not describe his life in the flat tones of socialist realism. I began to wish that Kross had spent less time with his professor and more time with another visitor to his very slow train, the beautiful, young and fiery revolutionary writer Hella Wuolijoki.

## The lure of their land



Woman and child in 1908, one of the historical photographs in *The Native Americans*

THE Colombian quincenary in 1992 did wonders for the profile of American Indians. No longer discovered, but "encountered", no longer just savages or victims, but the inventors of a complex and independent cultural tradition that survived European conquest in varied and syncretic forms. Native North Americans were finally taken seriously.

This lavishly and intelligently illustrated book celebrates primarily that syncretism: the first thousand generations of pre-history, from the initial ice age arrival via Siberia and Alaska to 16th-century European contact, occupy a fifth of its pages.

Here "Native Americans" means those in the US and a bit of Canada. Their history and anthropology are expertly woven together. Particular points, such as the potlatch feast or the manifold uses of a buffalo, are explained in detail.

But the 449 pictures are the point of this volume: they range from textbook maps

Norman Hammond

**THE NATIVE AMERICANS**

An Illustrated History

Edited by Betty and Ian Ballantine  
Virgin, £40

**BOOKS OF THE DEAD**

By Stanislaw Grof  
Thames & Hudson, £7.95

and diagrams and illustrations of artefacts, to a series of interpretations by living Native American artists of their own myths and history.

That most of these, such as Jaune Quick-to-See Smith's "Indian Horse" of 1992 or Blackbear Boxin's "And They Moved Without Him" of 1956, are firmly within the mainstream of post-war American art in both style and medium, only underlines how their culture has been co-opted by the Anglo tradition.

One of the many superb historical photographs says it all: George Gillette, chairman of the Fort Berthold tribal council in North Dakota, standing immaculate in a pinstriped suit, weeping as the US Government takes 155,000 acres of the tribe's best land for a reservoir.

Among the best-known of Native America's cultural legacies are their funerary rites, documented by conquistadors and early travellers with a mixture of fascination and disgust.

Stanislaw Grof, who a quarter of a century ago wrote *The Human Encounter with Death*, has compiled an illustrated overview of Aztec, Maya, Egyptian, Tibetan and medieval European manuscripts dealing with death and rebirth. His comparison of Maya and Aztec creation myths, with Egyptian and Tibetan prescriptions for the afterlife is misleading. But Grof comes up with some striking, albeit unrelated, visual parallels.

BANK HOLIDAY

BOOKS

On Saturday:  
Benedict Nightingale reviews the autobiography of Joan Littlewood, theatre's oddball genius;  
Lynne Truss on a new comic novel from actor, Stephen Fry

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## Russia's great lost hope

Lesley Chamberlain

**THIS I CANNOT FORGET**

The memoirs of Nikolai Bukharin's widow  
By Anna Larina  
Hutchinson, £25

NIKOLAI Bukharin was purged in 1938 after a show trial that gripped the world. Charges which included attempting to assassinate Lenin in 1918 (in place of the accused Fanny Kaplan) and forming a Trotskyist bloc to bring down Soviet power convinced many foreigners and Russians that Stalin had right on his side. Others, including his wife Anna Larina, knew that Soviet Russia had lost its most intelligent, vital and intellectual founding father.

Bukharin was a passionate believer in what he called socialist humanism — a world of "free anarchistic competition" where Marxism would prevail in cultural and intellectual life. Almost his last words to his wife were: "Bring up our son as a true Bolshevik".

When Gorbachev finally paved the way for his rehabilitation in 1987, leading to a complete vindication of charges in 1988, and readmission into the Communist Party, there was an outbreak of national elation. Speeches, articles, films, television programmes, a poem (by Yevushenko) and a novel commemorated a great lost hope and revived him as a

possible new figurehead for an uncertain future. Anna Larina who had worked for this liberating moment, since she returned from Siberia in 1959 published her book and became a heroine. Readers all over Russia wrote, one thanking her for "giving him back to us alive". Introducing the story, Stephen F. Cohen, Bukharin's biographer, gives a gripping account of this emotional chapter in recent Russian history.

LARINA's own words are necessarily more diffuse, but belong, like Nadezhda Mandelstam's, with the widows' memoirs which, together with the literature of the gulag, have painted the Russian terror in all its hellish detail.

Anna, born in 1914, the beautiful daughter of another founding Bolshevik, Yuri Larin, grew up in an atmosphere of ideological conviction and passion for reform. Bukharin, 26 years her senior, was a family friend and constant visitor before he became her girlish crush and finally husband at the age of 20. They had their only child, Yuri, shortly before Bukharin was imprisoned. Anna, living in the Kremlin, lost her milk at the first intimation of the crackdown.

One of the most vivid sections of this book comes towards the end, where she relives their last desperate days together. When Anna

began her eight-year tour of Stalin's detention camps before the trial, Yuri was sent to a home. The two did not meet again for almost 20 years, when she found Yuri had not only survived, but inherited his father's gift for painting.

For those heightened moments, Anna's Bolshevik girlfriend, and Bukharin's ebullient, emotional character this book is essential reading. The intervening detailed chronicle is more for Russian readers and Larina herself: the record had to be set straight after all the lies.

Cohen points out a tendency in Anna to see in Bukharin only political naivety, no guile, and suggests that at her age he may well have kept from her some of his more gruesome knowledge of Stalin's ways. He certainly believed Stalin murdered his first wife Aliluyeva. Anna remains baffled by evil, as when a childhood friend, Andrei Sverdlov, suddenly reappears as her interrogator. Nor can she understand why her clever, philosophical husband should have appealed to Stalin, his "little father", to save him. Together with her courage that moral single-mindedness probably saved her.



Rachel Cusk grapples with an ambitious tale of race, class and star-crossed lovers

# The colour of love

John Updike's *Brazil* is an attempt at many things, a novel least among them. It offers a modern incarnation of the legendary lovers Tristan (Tristao) and Isolde (Isabel), and through them a pageant of all the faces of love. It is a radical, but also a literary conceit about race. It follows the symmetrical "quest" sequence of the heroic saga, but without an object. It is also, more prosaically, a book about the evolution of modern Brazil, about colonialism, class and society, and about geography. At times these various elements sound out together a harmony of considerable depth; at others the clash of symbols can be deafening.

The novel opens with the star-crossed meeting of the lovers on a beach in Rio de Janeiro. Tristao is a black 19-year-old ruffian with a razor blade, Isabel the cosseted white daughter of the diplomatic classes. To each the skin of the other signifies all that is different, distinct and mysterious, a catalyst which ensures explosive consequences for their sexual and spiritual union. In the mythical manner of such encounters the two recognise and claim one another straight away, but the taint of otherness which now clings to them marks them out for fate's pleasure.

To escape the controlling arm of Isabel's father, they embark on an adventure of flight through Brazil, where adversity drives them further and further away from modern meaning and backwards into the history of their own differences. They languish in decadence in São Paulo and are routed apart. Tristao becomes a worker, and Isabel a student. Reunited later, they flee to a remote mountain where men mine vainly for gold in small claims, digging deep graves for their aspirations. The test of hardship reveals less attractive sides to their natures, as Tristao becomes a rough miner and Isabel a cynical prostitute. Eventually the henchman sent by Isabel's father catches up with them, and in the culmination of their dark, soiled life on the mountain Tristao murders him.

They set out in expiation across Mato Grosso, a vast untouched wilderness where by starvation and savagery everything is stripped from them. Their bodies become ghosts through whose translucence their love is visible once more in purity, but just as this physical attenuation approaches its conclusion in death the pair are apprehended by *bandedantes*, a colony of Portuguese inquisitors caught in an echo of Brazil's imperial past. Things begin to appear a trifle far-fetched as everyone starts speaking in medieval idioms, but the element of farce scrapes through to be incorporated into the costume drama of the lovers' historic transposition. Isabel is claimed as the leader's concubine, while Tristao is returned to a state of manacled slavery.

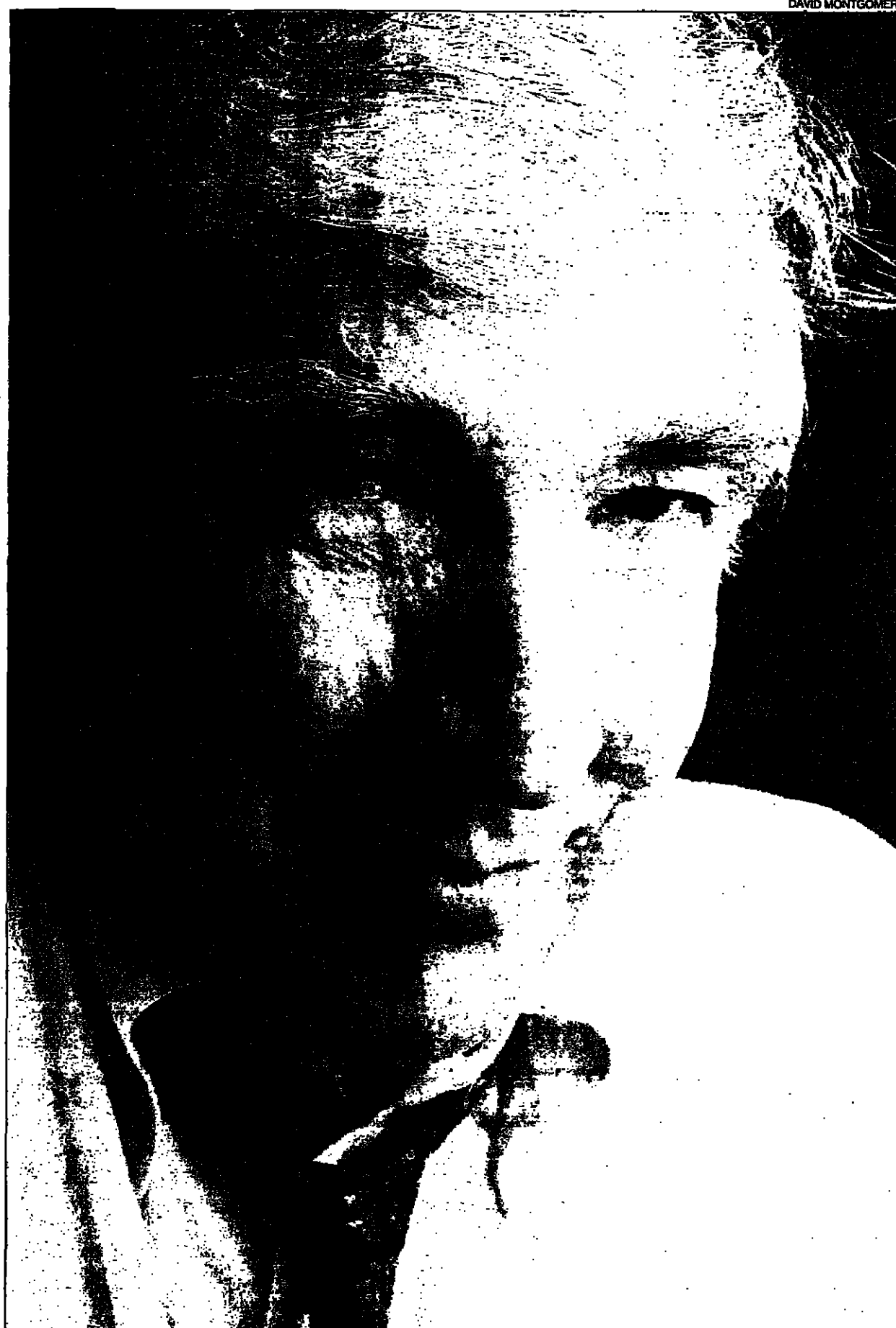
Pared down to their essential differences, Isabel takes it upon herself to mend the fault running down the centre of their union. Through various shamanic contrivances she takes on Tristao's blackness, leaving him blanched white. Thus reassembled they are able to return to modern life in urban Brazil, but in digging up the root of their problems — their incompatibility in the eyes of society — they of course forfeit their star-crossed status. They become a regular couple whom the country-club corporate circuit can claim as its own: middle-aged, brassy and promiscuous.

In an amusing epitaph to the lovers' unsparing adventures, Updike briefly describes this sizeable tranche of ignominious ease: "The banality, the brightly masked tedium of bourgeois life — tale-tellers remain talked by it." Though this chapter covers the greatest stretch of time, let it be no longer than it is! Updike's distance from his characters and their culture is too variable to allow the story to function properly as either fable or novel, and he maintains a metaphorical detachment which runs the risk of the whole enterprise being abandoned rather to levity in its closing stages. Traces of guidebook description ("Most of Brazil is a vast, gently mountainous tableland; the coastal mountains are the legs of the table") appear alongside flashes of unfocused intimacy: for example, Tristao's thoughts about himself in his mother's womb, "he would have been a miniature of himself, his feet and hands fat on their backs like small leaves of broad rising", — are moving and beautifully exact, but peculiarly impersonal and unconvincing as the machinations of his consciousness.

This detachment slides into carelessness in places (when Isabel changes race the rather glib claim is made that "there was something sardonic in her sexuality now, something jaded by the experience of black female generations"), only to realign itself moments later with passages in which nothing is taken for granted (the description of Tristao's monotonous work at the factory, where in contrast to the stately mechanisation of their surroundings, "the human attendants of the machines... looked grotesquely lackadaisical and soft, like wet clay dropped here and there.")

*Brazil* is filled with too much of the outsider's miscellany to sustain the sleekness of its silhouette, but its chaotic flavour delivers more meat than might at first seem possible. The proximity of humour and horror, civilisation and savagery, of the beautiful and the bestial, form strong pictures of the country Updike has taken as his heroine; but the irrepressible poetry and profundity of his writing also brings the incidental into relief, with small human strokes which remain as memorable as the larger design.

BRAZIL  
By John Updike  
Hamish Hamilton, £14.99



John Updike has produced an extraordinary poetic mixture of humour and horror, civilisation and savagery

## Brothers and rivals



Remarkable men: Henry James (left) and brother, William

Never can a louder chorus of groans have echoed across the Atlantic than you hear in the opening pages of these collected letters between the brothers William and Henry James. One of Henry's most famous letters is here, the description of his joyous discovery of Rome at the age of 26, in 1869, when he "went reeling and moaning thro' the streets, in a fever of enjoyment". That experience inspired his brilliant first novel, *Roderick Hudson*.

But from other letters we learn that there was much reeling and moaning of a different kind. There are pages and pages by both of the brothers about Henry's constipation. Only a few weeks before the Rome letter, he had sent a really anguished (yet still witty) verbal outpouring from Florence about his "unhappy bowels", damning the greasy vegetables of Italy, and admitting to a vision of watery English cauliflower that made his heart "beat and throb".

It is much the same when William is in Europe on his young man's grand tour and is writing home to Henry. He goes through Germany racked by obscure pains in his back muscles. His letters continually stray from subjects like "the curious coexistence of sausage and moonshine sentimentality in the German female nature" to broodings on the efficacy of baths, blisters and corsets. Yet all this is just like a grin overtaking us for surprises. For the correspondence turns, as it goes on its long road through the decades, into the tale of two remarkable men, who both discovered their powers, and both found their own distinctive happiness.

The fact that the brothers remained such energetic correspondents all their lives shows how much they meant to each other. Yet one other shadow, now darkening, now lightning, continues to hang over the letters. Henry's biographer, Leon Edel, has portrayed the two men as modern

equivalents of Jacob and Esau, obsessed by a profound rivalry with each other. That seems an exaggeration. Yet the letters certainly reveal a glancing battle going on all the time. William was slightly older than Henry, and though he reads everything Henry writes, and lavishes praise on it, he never fails to add some scrap of criticism and fatherly piece of advice. Henry is too confident ever to be diverted from his course, but murmurs of resentment can be detected in his replies, and sometimes he has his revenge.

After William settled down to an academic life at Harvard in his early thirties, he often missed the rich life of Europe, and Henry seems to be sparing his feelings when he says, as he frequently does, what a quiet life he is living now he has made his home in London. But in one splendidly felicitous letter, written when he was 34, he begins by observing casually that he has "neither seen nor done much" — and then lets William have it with both barrels. He has dined with Thomas Henry Huxley ("I wish you knew him"), lunched at one of Lord Moughton's "great medleys", had dear Benson to breakfast, and been to a "big luscious & ponderous banquet where I sat between the fat Mrs Van

Derwent May

CORRESPONDENCE  
OF WILLIAM JAMES  
Volumes I and II:  
William and Henry

Edited by Ignas  
K. Skrupskelis  
and Elizabeth  
M. Berkley  
University of Virginia Press,  
£39.95 each

de Weyer & the fatter Miss ditto". But, he concludes, with a supreme air of innocence, "I can think of no other gayeties or gossip." That lets William know precisely the difference between them.

Nevertheless William marries, becomes a pioneering professor of psychology, has five children, builds himself a country house, manages the finances of his sister and brothers — and is plainly made for an active life such as this. He writes vivid, intimate accounts of it all to Henry, unable one day to resist the jibe: "You skinny bachelors know nothing of the thickness of life."

Henry writes gracious, interested replies. When William's son Billy becomes captain of his school football team, he says: "I am so glad. I would almost give myself to be booted by him." Henry always

has a good phrase, sonorous yet betraying the irrepressible comedian in him: when William's mother-in-law and her daughter see their baggage flooded while disembarking after a voyage to Europe, he commiserates with "the salt horror of their trunks". Meanwhile, with his ailments fading away, just as William's had done, he gets on with his agreeable bachelor life in Kensington — his fame growing, his wealth increasing, and his delightful nieces and nephews left blessedly unseen, far away across the sea.

William admits to his struggles with his own writings about psychology: "You haven't to force every sentence in the teeth of irreducible and stubborn facts as I do. It is like walking through the densest brushwood." Henry is less inclined to discuss his books with William, though there is one wonderful moment when he is commenting on a novel by their mutual friend William Dean Howells. Henry expresses "constant wonder" at Howells' "abundance and facility", but observes that "he has purchased them by throwing the whole question of form, style & composition overboard into the deep sea — from which, on my side, I am perpetually trying to fish them up." A sentence that is a triumphant fishing expedition in its own right!

Many other themes pervade these letters — the more unhappy fates of the other two brothers, Wilky and Bob, the death of their gifted sister Alice, and Henry's disastrous attempt to become a playwright. But at the end, in 1896 (with one more volume of letters between the brothers to come in this edition), they are both in splendid shape, with their greatest works still ahead of them: William's *Pragmatism and Varieties of Religious Experience*, Henry's *The Wings of the Dove* and *The Golden Bowl*.

This edition of the letters is somewhat pedantic, including a 76-page appendix of changes that the brothers made in their letters as they were writing, none of which reveal anything of the slightest interest. But anyone fascinated by Henry James and his world will have countless moments of joyous "reeling and moaning" as they make their way through this monumental correspondence.

## Interior journey

Claire Messud

PARADISE  
By Abdulrazak Gurnah  
Hamish Hamilton, £14.99

THE delight of the quest narrative is also its major difficulty: preoccupied by the promise of meaning at the end of the road, one presses compulsively on, but it is easy to forget that the destination may not be the point of the trip.

These, in broadest terms, are the pleasures and dangers of Abdulrazak Gurnah's fourth novel, *Paradise*, which traces the East African peregrinations of a Muslim boy named Yusuf, sold at the age of 12 to a merchant he has known as "Uncle Aziz". Aziz leads him back to his coastal home where Yusuf grows into an exceedingly good-looking adolescent who spends his free time wandering in Aziz's paradisaical garden.

But it is always clear that this is only a staging post in a grander voyage, and Yusuf evinces no surprise when his master eventually enlists him on a trading expedition to the interior. Once again, however, he only gets halfway, and is abandoned for months in the home of a merchant named Hamud Suleiman, in the shadow of the mountain that separates the known world from the unknown. Here again, Yusuf learns lessons and has adventures, but the reader shares his restlessness, his eagerness for the extravagant and gruelling pilgrimage to come.

WHEN Aziz again retrieves his beautiful boy and includes him in the trading party, their travels start to go seriously awry. The path to the domain of the godless tribal chief Chatu is a tortuous struggle to the heart of darkness — but it is a darkness where the true horror is the all-powerful advancing white man who successfully terrorises and enslaves the "savages" and the "civilised" Africans alike, and puts an end to their nomadic trading practices.

One would expect this elegant, epic tale to end at this point, or to offer a denouement that served as its thematic summing up. This is not, after all, a slice-of-life story: it is presented as a symbolic fable with prose to match ("In the dusty shadowlands of the snow-capped mountain, where the warrior people lived and where little rain fell, lived

a legendary European..."). But Yusuf retraces his exhausted steps, back to his master's house and to a host of new troubles, this time of a romantic nature.

He learns, as we learn, that his life of slavery simply goes on: "Events had ordered his days and he had... kept his eyes on the nearer horizon, choosing ignorance rather than futile knowledge of what lay ahead. There was nothing he could think of to do which would unshackle him from the bond-

age to the life he had lived."

While a true-to-life description of his plight, this late realism sits awkwardly with the mythical stature of the journey and of much of the novel's style. For most of the book, Yusuf exists as a pure narrative force rather than as a psychological character, interspersed with Koranic anecdotes and snippets of folklore and magic, his story seems refreshingly far from the specifics of anyone's daily life.

The denouement alters the tone and the thrust of the novel in unsettling (not to say unsatisfying) ways. But there is much to admire in this peculiar hybrid, as well as much to enjoy; and its structural inconsistencies ultimately make for an ambitious and thought-provoking, if disconcerting, novel.

## Dreams of old Orkney

THIS is George Mackay Brown's sixth novel. He has also published seven books of poems and seven of short stories. Indeed he always styles himself "poet and storyteller", and this may be why he is often omitted from the usual compendia detailing contemporary writers of fiction.

Mackay Brown does not altogether belong in contemporary company. Those who find realism in the squeezing of a blackhead will be disappointed in his sagas of Vikings and ploughmen. On the other hand, his steady audience will find this "beautifully crafted novel set on the fictitious island of Norday" — the blurb is accurate — the Orkney mixture very much as before.

Here is the introspective boy, already encountered in a collection of stories called *A Calendar of Love*, sent home from school for dreaming in class. But what dreams Thorfinn has! He imagines himself to be a cabin-boy in a ship navigating the Northern Seas, much like the hero of the immediately previous novel, *Vinland*. In another chapter he witnesses the dancing of the

Philip Hobsbaum

BESIDE THE OCEAN  
OFTIME

By George Mackay  
Brown  
John Murray, £14.99

seal people previously celebrated in a collection called *Hawkfall*.

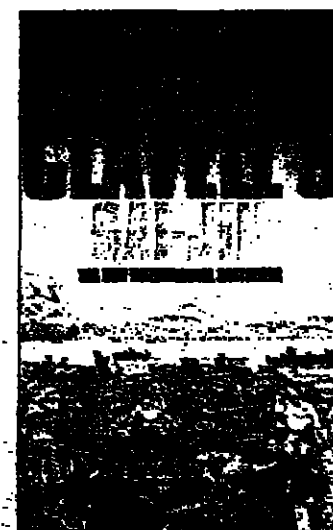
However, the narrative is not so other-worldly as this might suggest. There is a sense of contemporary life interspersing the dreams — a life contemporary, that is to say, with Thorfinn's *alter ego*, the author himself. It is in 1930, when he was then aged about ten, that he encounters the gruff peasant, old Jacob, who is himself a recension of a seasoned labourer first evoked in *The Year of the Whale*, possibly Mackay Brown's best and certainly his most influential book of poems. A miniature biography of this labourer interrupts, lyrically and fruitfully, the narrative of the whole.

THE setting, in most instances, is Orkney. But where as the place is constant, the chronology is variable. One chapter begins with a fishing scene that could have taken place any time in the last two thousand years. But, as though it were a camera panning to include a wider territory, the narrative shows the island beset with concrete bunkers, legacies of the Second World War. The camera then, so to speak, tracks across the sea to show an Orkneyman trapped in a German prison-camp.

This is the dreaming boy, Thorfinn grown up to be a disillusioned writer. He takes the opportunity to criticise his own earlier works, and these are represented by the chapters we have just read. There is a cunning in this self-reflexion: "the spirit of a place is not so easily quenched".

Through the dizzying contrasts of this book, from modern Orkney to Viking voyage and back again, the lyric cadence beckons us on. These chapters seem to be chippings from the master's workshop. But what a workshop! And what a master!

JAMES CLAVELL'S epic new  
novel of people and passion



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# British players stumble from failure to farce

NOBODY could have taken it seriously. The winner of a competition, asked to give the answer that had earned him a new tennis racket, was plainly overcome with emotion as he received his prize on the Royal Berkshire Club's main indoor court at Bracknell.

The opponent, who survived a match-point against Chris Bailey during last year's Wimbledon, apparently was "Ivanisevic". If Bailey had indeed been competing against a cross between Ivan Lendl and Goran Ivanisevic, no wonder he was beaten.

The error went unnoticed by the master of ceremonies, Mark Curry. The next duty of the former children's television presenter was to introduce the players. One of them, Andrew Foster, was representing a team known as Highly Strung Matchpoint.

All this preceded the potentially decisive match in a new three-day event designed to promote British tennis. After sinking to a nadir in the Davis Cup last weekend, it may be considered to be in a farcical state, but this, surely, was taking the joke too far.

Superficially, the innovative scheme might be regarded as a failure. Scarcely a hundred spectators gathered to see the completion of a competition linking the best professionals and amateurs in the country. But many more will watch them in May and June.

The Vauxhall Indoor Trophy club tournament is to be shown in retrospect on Channel Four in a series of six half-hour programmes on Sunday afternoons during the months

Stuart Jones, tennis correspondent, looks at an attempt to raise the profile of the game on television before Wimbledon begins

preceding Wimbledon. The profile of domestic players is to be raised beyond a fortnight of close scrutiny. Chris Bailey, Britain's No 3, used home advantage to beat Foster and clinch the trophy for the host club, where he has been a member for a couple of years. He appreciates the coverage as well as valuable match practice.

## RESULTS

SEMI-FINALS: Matchpoint Bramhall 2 David Lloyd Rye Park 1; Royal Berkshire A 2 Puma Sunderland A 0. Final: Royal Berks A 2 Bramhall 0.

He has been troubled by a damaged wrist for two months.

"Wherever we play on the Reebok tour in Britain, we are used to playing in front of the proverbial man and a dog," he said. "So this is a big crowd for us. But the main benefit will be seen on television. People will be able to identify with us a lot more."

"Kids identify with what they watch, even if they can't see us live in action. In the doubles at Wimbledon last year, we used the I-formation, where you stand in the middle of the court when your partner is serving. When I went back to my club, all the juniors were using it."

The programme is to be presented by Bailey, another to profit from competition after being out of the game for four months nursing an injured cartilage back to health. Since his celebrated defeat against Ivanisevic, he, more than any British player, has come to know the value of public awareness.

"We will be covering much more than just the matches," he explained. "We will be showing that we work hard. We don't spend our time in exotic places the whole year." He happens to be leaving today to continue his recuperation in the West Indies.

One relative unknown who will be exposed is James Fox. The 19-year-old national junior champion beat Bailey in the semi-finals, but lost his singles in yesterday's final to Wilkinson's partner, Danny Sapsford, a non-playing member of the Davis Cup team in Portugal.

Foster, Britain's most successful player during last year's Wimbledon, was unable to take the final to the decisive doubles. His game faltered but his serve was powerful.

"How many shreds did you eat?" his opponent asked as he claimed another ace. "Not enough," he replied. He was a set and 1-5 down at the time.



Sapsford, the Davis Cup player, hits a forehand in his match in Bracknell

## Norman faces accusers as hearing opens

By DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

ANDY Norman, the British Athletics Federation (BAF) promotions director, yesterday faced for the first time some of those who have been calling for his dismissal when he appeared before the long-awaited disciplinary hearing into his conduct.

The BAF hearing, at a London hotel, was the first sighting of Norman by journalists since the suicide in January of Cliff Temple, whom Norman is alleged to have threatened in a telephone call six months before his death. The hearing had been delayed a month after Norman produced a sick-note but he showed no obvious sign of ill health yesterday. The illness has not been disclosed.

Norman must have hoped for a smooth transition from his taxi to the hearing room, but did not get one. The location was supposed to have been secret but he was greeted by a barricade of media representatives outside the hotel and had to push his way through. And once inside, he had to stop at reception to ask the way, giving photographers a field day. A group of American schoolchildren in the lobby poked fun at television cameramen as they rushed after Norman. "It's showtime," one shouted.

Norman, a former policeman, has to satisfy the hearing that he has not acted unprofessionally. Evidence presented related not only to Norman's allegations that Temple harassed a woman athlete he coached but also to other aspects of his conduct.

Duncan Mackay, Neil Wilson and Randall Northam,

three athletics journalists who reported allegations against Norman, provided evidence to the hearing. They gave an undertaking neither to report nor to repeat what was said. Norman rebutted much of the evidence.

Evidence was also heard from Mel Barty, coach to Eamonn Martin, the London Marathon champion, and John Lister, the BAF secretary. Barty told the hearing that he heard Norman accusing Temple of sexually harassing athletes. "I believe Norman should go," Barty said. "This was the final straw in his behaviour." Norman declined to comment after the hearing. The verdict is expected late next week.

In the event of Norman keeping his job, there will be calls for an independent enquiry. Merzies Campbell MP, the former 100 metres British record-holder, and Folkestone AC, Temple's club, have already done so.



Norman alleged threat

## LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

071-782 7344

### CONTRACTS & TENDERS

#### NHS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME CALL FOR OUTLINE PROPOSALS FOR RESEARCH INTO MENTAL HEALTH

A recent re-examination of the NHS Priorities for Research & Development in Mental Health has focused on those areas which require further attention. The Director of Research & Development for Yorkshire Regional Health Authority has responsibility for commissioning and managing the Programme on behalf of the NHS Management Executive.

The Directorate now wishes to commission work in the following areas:

- Prevention, to include evaluation of interventions for ethnic minorities and in high risk groups. Examples are: the elderly, children of psychiatric patients, and families of children with conduct disorder. (See notes to application form).
- Needs for Mental Health Care in Ethnic Minorities, to include innovation in new treatments and promotion of case detection.
- Training Packages for use in primary care and community settings, up to 10 projects of no more than £10,000 each will be funded for a maximum of 12 months to develop new training packages.

Short outline proposals in the above areas are invited, to be submitted on an application form available, together with supporting information on the underlying research questions, from the Research & Development Directorate, Yorkshire RHA, Queen Building, Park Parade, Harrogate, HG1 5AH.

Outline proposals should be submitted no later than 6 May 1994

Shortlisted Applicants will be notified by mid-July 1994.

Applicants whose proposals are shortlisted will be invited to submit more detailed proposals later in the year, but please note a very tight timetable will be used.

### FINANCIAL NOTICES

#### THE CARNEGIE UNITED KINGDOM TRUST Abstract of Audited Accounts For the Year Ended 31 December 1993

Funds and Provisions:	(£)
Endowment Fund	14,671,574
Reserve Fund	933,528
	15,605,102
Reserve Fund:	
As at 31 December 1992	734,996
Income from investments, etc	1,287,785
	2,022,781
Less Grant expenditure	695,785
Non-grant expenditure	393,510
	1,629,271
As at December 1993	933,528

C JOHN NAYLOR Secretary and Treasurer, Carnegie Park House, Dunfermline, KY12 7EA, 10 March 1994.

### LEGAL NOTICES

INSOLVENCY RULES 1986 (RULE 4.10(1))  
KORRES RESTAURANTS (1994) LIMITED  
IN CREDITORS VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION  
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Liquidator, Mr. J. J. Barry, of 20, 21 & 22, Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 3DF, has been appointed Liquidator of the above-named company on the 28th March 1994. All creditors who have claims against the company are invited to submit their claims in writing to the Liquidator at the above address by the 28th March 1994.

### LEGAL NOTICES

D & M Khan Limited (in Creditors Voluntary Liquidation)  
THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986 (RULE 4.10(1))  
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GAARD INSTRUMENTS LIMITED (in Creditors Voluntary Liquidation)  
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NO. 001861 of 1994  
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE  
CHANCERY DIVISION  
IN MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
SECURITIES PLC  
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NO. 001862 of 1994  
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IN MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
SECURITIES PLC  
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## Board strikes compromise on ruck-maul controversy

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

COMPROMISE coming as naturally as it does to the International Rugby Football Board (IRFB), it was no surprise when yesterday they announced a halfway house over the controversial ruck-maul law. In this case, however, the board may prove not only accurate in their assessment, but also to have struck a blow against "size-ism" in rugby union.

The experiment adopted in 1992 allowed the side not in possession to take the scrum after a ruck or maul had been stopped — the "turnover" law. After the conclusion of the annual council meeting in London, the IRFB announced a split decision: that the team going forward at a ruck would retain the feed at any subsequent scrum; but once a maul has stopped, the team not in possession would be awarded the scrum.

"A clear majority of countries indicated they considered it undesirable to return to the pre-1992 situation," Roger Vanderfield, the Australian chairman of the board's laws committee, said. "Perhaps we could encourage more rucking

and less mauling. We live in hope, but the likelihood of more rucking and less mauling depends on the attitude of players and, more particularly, the attitude of coaches."

There has been general agreement that the law has so cluttered midfield with forwards standing off loose scrums that the scoring of tries has become a rare commodity

that players will have to go in to stop the maul, which will cause the ball to be released," Templeton said. "Either teams will drive the ruck or the backs can use it." The law should also favour physically smaller sides, whose rucking technique can be improved but who can do nothing about their size in the close-quarters work of the maul.

David Pears, forced by a hamstring injury to miss England's final international of the season against Wales earlier this month, returns to action for Harlequins in their Pilkington Cup semi-final against Bath on Saturday. It is an opportune moment because the England selectors meet over the weekend to confirm the tour party to South Africa and Pears must indicate his fitness for what will be a demanding tour. Bill Drake-Lee will take the place at flanker of the injured Neil Back in the Leicester team that plays Orrell in the other semi-final.

But the IRFB remains concerned about refereeing standards and will oversee two conferences this year, involving leading coaches, referees, players and development officers, which will seek uniformity of interpretation of the laws. The first, from May 13 to 15, will be hosted by the Rugby Football Union and the second

will be staged later in the year in the southern hemisphere. "In some cases," Vanderfield said, "referees are not doing their job." Offside was a particular problem, he admitted, and reminders will be given to referees about players rejoining loose scrums in an offside position, and that once mauls have stopped, they should not be allowed to re-adjust and continue.

The RFU, for one, will be less than happy that coaches will be allowed on the field at half-time in all matches; their players, though, may welcome the change which allows the payment of personal and communications allowances (£22 a day at present) while on international duty at home.

The board has also reduced the residential requirement for international players from three years to one year, although a player can obtain permission for a reduction of that period if it conflicts — as it may do in New Zealand — with common law. However, the three-year eligibility period remains for a capped player seeking to appear for another national team.

## England tour the litmus test

Optimism is a precious commodity in South Africa. That Luyt should have been looking on the bright side yesterday was hardly surprising, but even Luyt, now something of a one-man band in South African rugby, cannot predict the future in his country, let alone control it.

Luyt, the president of the South African Rugby Football Union, has assured his colleagues on the International Rugby Football Board (IRFB) that his union will not hesitate to relinquish its rights to the 1995 World Cup if the volatile political situation suggests competitors or spectators are in danger. It is all he can do.

But given how much hangs on successful sporting contacts — commercial contracts, tourism, bidding for such prestigious events as the 2004 Olympic Games — the pressure on Luyt to keep his advice to himself will be enormous. Advice both to the Rugby Football Union, who send an England tour party to South Africa in May.

"It has been a terrible week for South Africa," Luyt said when asked about the violence on the streets of central Johannesburg — streets which are no distance from the Transvaal Rugby Union's headquarters at Ellis Park.

the management company of which Luyt runs. "But I think the in-fighting between the African National Congress and Inkatha will be history soon. That will stop after the elections." It is an expression of hope that all will share, but that is all it is. "I am not that confident on anything," Luyt admitted. "But I hope there will be calm in South Africa afterwards."

"I can't reassure anyone. We stay in touch with the government and the security forces, and if they advise against bringing anyone into the country, we will notify them." On the credit side, Luyt points out, the Australian cricketers have maintained their tour of South Africa while two rugby teams — the New Zealand Maoris and Western Samoa — have just ended successful visits.

He will be encouraged that Otago have voted to visit Johannesburg next week for their Super Ten game against Transvaal, the holders, even though officials of the New Zealand province offered their players the

chance to withdraw. He expressed amazement that Newport had chosen to pull out of a planned tour, but that is small beer compared with England.

England remain a touchstone for Luyt and the directors of Rugby World Cup, even though the IRFB yesterday did not agree. If England do not tour, the knock-on effect will be substantial — on South Africa's competitive status as an international country, on the development

programme to which Luyt says 30 per cent of all income is devoted, on the chances of the 1995 World Cup being staged there.

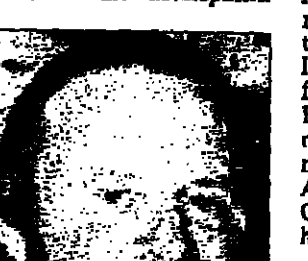
"We are concerned about the violence, but the World Cup is 13 months away and there is time yet for things to settle down," Eddie Tonks, retiring chairman of the IRFB, said. Nevertheless, instructions have gone from the board to Rugby World Cup to ensure contingency plans are in place.

Eight countries have offered themselves as alternative venues, but for all practical purposes it boils down to two locations: New Zealand/Australia and the United Kingdom. Since three-quarters of the commercial programme is already in place, of which television revenue forms a large slice, the similar time frame would favour Britain. However, the 1991 tournament was held here, so natural justice and the fact Australia hold the Webb Ellis Cup point to the southern hemisphere as first choice.

"South Africa's representatives have made a commitment that they will not put anyone in the rugby world in danger," Tonks said. "Their reputation is on the line. They have no vested interest in seeing either that or South African rugby destroyed."



DAVID HANDS  
Rugby Commentary



Tonks concerned



# Injured Llewellyn misses National

By RICHARD EVANS  
RACING CORRESPONDENT

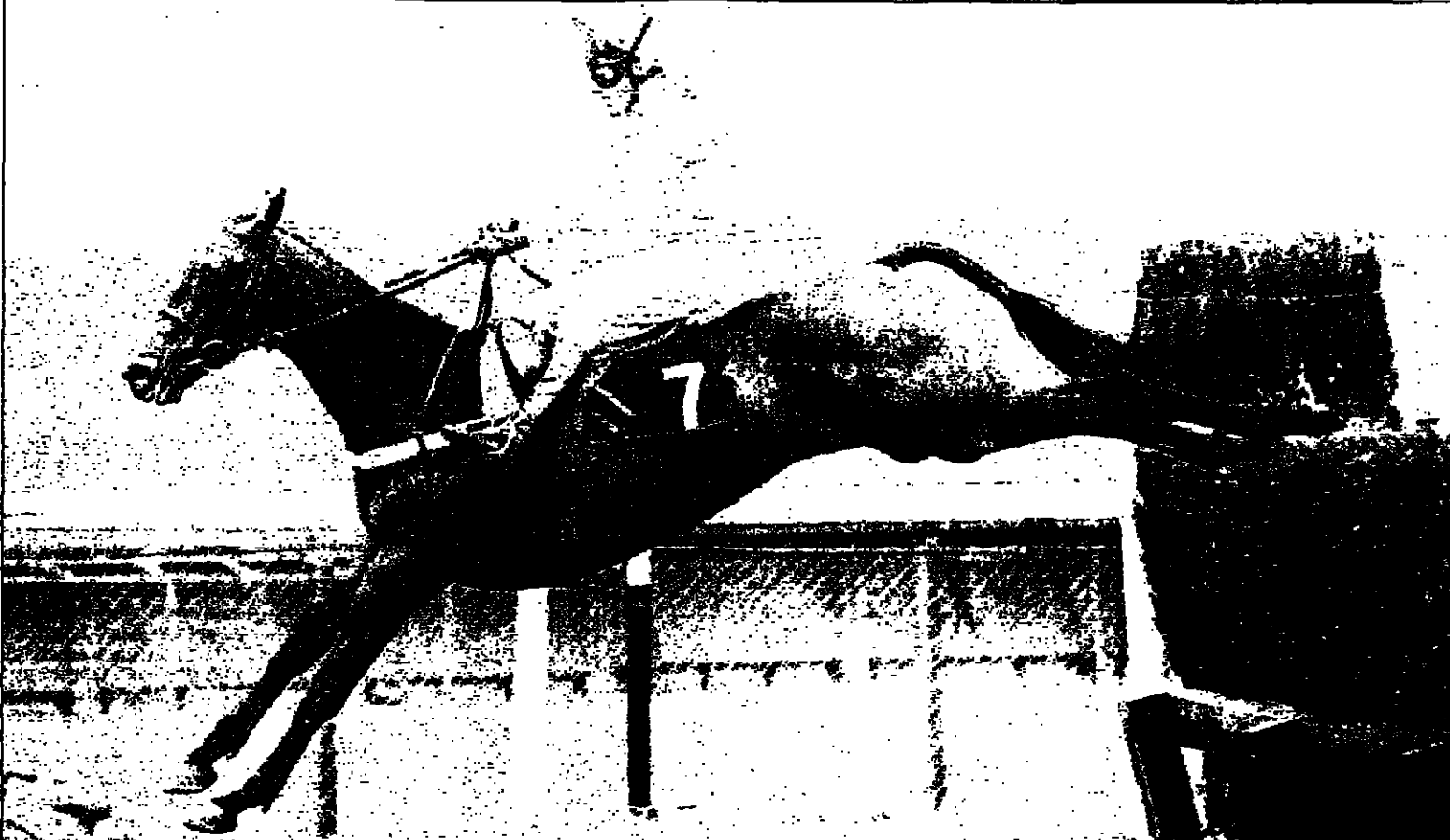
THE dreams and drama of the Martell Grand National yesterday when The Fellow was crowned a definite runner and the unfortunate Carl Llewellyn was ruled out of the world's greatest steeplechase with a broken leg.

Llewellyn, who won the Grand National on Party Politics in 1992, had been set to ride Young Hustler, the favourite for this year's race, before he was sidelined in a freak accident as horses gathered at the start for the Golden Eagle Novices' Chase.

The jockey was circling on Ghia Gneulagh when he was struck on his left leg by Hops And Pops, the subsequent winner of the race. David Bridgewater is set to replace Llewellyn on Young Hustler.

No horse has won the Cheltenham Gold Cup and the Grand National in the same year since Golden Miller in 1977, although several have tried including Davy Lad in 1977, Alverton in 1979 and Garrison Savannah, who was headed on the run-in by Scargam in 1991.

Following The Fellow's victory at Cheltenham two weeks ago, his trainer, Francois Doumen, announced yesterday his prize nine-year-old chaser would run at Aintree on Saturday week and attempt to succeed where others have failed.



Hops And Pops and Simon Earle negotiate the last fence safely on their way to victory in the Golden Eagle Novices' Chase at Ascot

"The Fellow is in perfect condition, both physically and mentally, 13 days after his race at Cheltenham. Therefore, with the Marquessa de Moratalla [the horse's owner], we have decided to give the go-ahead for the Martell Grand National," the Lamorlaye trainer said.

The sporting decision by the horse's connections adds a touch of real class to this year's race and on the form book, at least, The Fellow looks to have an exceptional chance of completing the historic double. If he wins, it will be the first victory by a French-trained horse in the race.

Ladbroke's immediately made The Fellow their 6-1 clear favourite while William Hill and Corals have the French-raised 7-1 joint-favourite with Double Silk.

The injury to Llewellyn, which will rule him out of race riding for at least six weeks, came as the three ambulances on duty at Ascot were kept at full stretch by a series of spills, including nine falls in the first three races.

Adrian Maguire was taken to hospital after being kicked in the back during the first race but was subsequently discharged. However, David Stephens, the amateur rider of Tamar Lass in the Merlin Novices' Hunters Chase, fractured his tibia and fibula and was detained at Wexham Park Hospital in Slough last night.

## Free-running Manntari leads classic expectations

By OUR IRISH RACING CORRESPONDENT

NIJINSKY, Golden Fleece, El Gran Senor. The names alone of past Irish-trained classic champions suggest the fading of the National Hunt grip in the face of growing anticipation for the Flat.

The beauty of this time of the year is that the aforementioned trio were the exceptions, the ones who exceeded the expectations. It is rare but it happens and that hope is always there. It will always be there when colts like Manntari start their classic year.

The ten-length winner of the group one National Stakes at the Curragh last September is likely to return in the Leopardstown 2,000 Guineas Trial on April 6 and

answer some of the questions raised by that National Stakes victory. Questions like what did he beat that day? The second on that occasion, City Nights, was beaten on the opening day of the Flat here, while the third home, State Performer, was found to have a respiratory abnormality.

However, Manntari could only win. The lengthy, brown colt can only do that on his comeback also, but that will not necessarily guarantee him a place in the 2,000 Guineas. The well-documented dispute between the Aga Khan and the Jockey Club has not been resolved yet, but it is encouraging that the horse has been entered.

It is to be hoped that Manntari gets his chance at Newmarket as the Guineas looks to be his classic opportunity. By Doyoun, Manntari has a free-running style that could militate against him getting a mile and a half.

Manntari's trainer, John Oxx, looks to have the most promising crop of second-season horses in Ireland. The Aga's pair, Akhiyar and Cajarian, are Epsom Derby entries. Akhiyar's only run was an easy defeat of 26 rivals in a Curragh maiden in October. Also by Doyoun, Akhiyar's grand-dam, Akidyah, won the Arc and Oxx feels he should stay 12 furlongs.

Cajarian is by the 1986 Derby winner, Shahrastani, and did well last year to win over six furlongs and then over seven furlongs in a group three event at Leopardstown. Colts with classic potential are thin on the ground in Ireland.

### LEICESTER

THUNDERER  
2.20 Java Queen, 2.50 Gold Trail, 3.20 Cavers Vanguish, 3.50 Doris Dore, 4.20 Honey Bun, 4.50 Zubon. 5.20 Secret Ally.  
Our Newmarket Correspondent: 2.50 GOLD TRAIL (nap), 5.20 Secret Ally.  
The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 4.50 ZUBON.

GOING: SOFT SIS DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE

### 2.20 HARBOROUGH FILLES HANDICAP

(3-7-0: £2,400: 1m 10yds) (10 runners)  
1 (1) 014 AMY QUEEN 22 (10yds) 4-10-0 L Duffell 92  
2 (2) 140 AMY QUEEN 22 (10yds) 4-10-0 L Duffell 92  
3 (3) 140 AMY QUEEN 22 (10yds) 4-10-0 L Duffell 92  
4 (4) 140 AMY QUEEN 22 (10yds) 4-10-0 L Duffell 92  
5 (5) 140 AMY QUEEN 22 (10yds) 4-10-0 L Duffell 92  
6 (6) 140 AMY QUEEN 22 (10yds) 4-10-0 L Duffell 92  
7 (7) 140 AMY QUEEN 22 (10yds) 4-10-0 L Duffell 92  
8 (8) 140 AMY QUEEN 22 (10yds) 4-10-0 L Duffell 92  
9 (9) 140 AMY QUEEN 22 (10yds) 4-10-0 L Duffell 92  
10 (10) 140 AMY QUEEN 22 (10yds) 4-10-0 L Duffell 92

### 2.50 KINGSNIGHT MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES

(3-7-0: £2,600: 1m 5yds) (8 runners)  
1 (1) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
2 (2) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
3 (3) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
4 (4) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
5 (5) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
6 (6) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
7 (7) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
8 (8) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92

### 3.20 GADSBY HANDICAP

(3-7-0: £4,400: 1m 2yds) (7 runners)  
1 (1) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
2 (2) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
3 (3) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
4 (4) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
5 (5) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
6 (6) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
7 (7) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92

### COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: W Jones, 4 winners from 18 runners, 22.2%: G Woods, 8 from 41, 19.5%: J Duffell, 12 from 74, 16.2%: R Swoburn, 4 from 25, 16.0%: B Jones, 24 winners from 134 rides, 17.9%: W R Swoburn, 10 from 55, 18.2%: L Duffell, 22 from 120, 18.3%: C Hodgson, 3 from 15, 20.0%: R Butler, 3 from 15, 20.0%: M Roberts, 20 from 138, 14.5%.

### 3.50 BURTON OVERLY SELLING STAKES

(3-7-0: £2,400: 1m 2yds) (13 runners)  
1 (1) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
2 (2) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
3 (3) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
4 (4) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
5 (5) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
6 (6) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
7 (7) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
8 (8) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
9 (9) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
10 (10) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
11 (11) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
12 (12) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
13 (13) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92

### 4.20 SIMON DE MONTFORT MAIDEN STAKES

(3-7-0: £2,200: 1m 2yds) (16 runners)  
1 (1) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
2 (2) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
3 (3) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
4 (4) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
5 (5) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
6 (6) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
7 (7) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
8 (8) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
9 (9) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
10 (10) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
11 (11) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
12 (12) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
13 (13) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
14 (14) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
15 (15) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
16 (16) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92

### 4.50 LANGHAM MAIDEN STAKES

(3-7-0: £2,200: 1m 3f 180yds) (9 runners)  
1 (1) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
2 (2) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
3 (3) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
4 (4) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
5 (5) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
6 (6) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
7 (7) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
8 (8) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
9 (9) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92

### 5.20 KIBWORTH HANDICAP

(3-7-0: £3,611: 1m 7yds) (13 runners)  
1 (1) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
2 (2) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
3 (3) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
4 (4) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
5 (5) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
6 (6) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
7 (7) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
8 (8) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
9 (9) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
10 (10) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
11 (11) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
12 (12) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
13 (13) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92

### HAMILTON PARK

#### THUNDERER

2.10 Fearless Wonder, 2.40 STOPPROVERBATE, 3.40 Francis Ann, 4.10 Dizzy, 4.40 Abolition's Pillar.  
Our Newmarket Correspondent: 2.10 Environmentalist.

#### GOING: HEAVY (SOFT IN PLACES)

DRAW: 5F-5F, HIGH NUMBERS BEST

#### 2.10 SPRINGFIELD MAIDEN STAKES

(3-7-0: £2,512: 1m 6yds) (9 runners)  
1 (1) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
2 (2) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
3 (3) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
4 (4) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
5 (5) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
6 (6) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
7 (7) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
8 (8) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
9 (9) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92

#### 2.40 TOM KINLOCH HANDICAP

(3-7-0: £3,184: 1m 6yds) (11 runners)  
1 (1) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
2 (2) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
3 (3) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
4 (4) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
5 (5) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
6 (6) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
7 (7) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
8 (8) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
9 (9) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
10 (10) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
11 (11) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92

#### 3.10 SUNDAY MAIL RACING CLUB MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES

(3-7-0: £2,422: 1m 4yds) (10 runners)  
1 (1) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
2 (2) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
3 (3) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
4 (4) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
5 (5) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
6 (6) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
7 (7) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
8 (8) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
9 (9) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92  
10 (10) 001 JONES 14 (10yds) 4-10-0 W R Swoburn 92

### RESULTS FROM YESTERDAY'S THREE MEETINGS

#### Ascot

Going: good  
1.20 (2m 110yds) 1, Little Town (J R Swoburn, 7-2), 2, Star Shadow (12-1), 3, Shadow (12-1), 4, Sound Current (12-1), 5, Star Shadow (12-1), 6, Sound Current (12-1), 7, Star Shadow (12-1), 8, Sound Current (12-1), 9, Star Shadow (12-1), 10, Sound Current (12-1), 11, Star Shadow (12-1), 12, Sound Current (12-1), 13, Star Shadow (12-1), 14, Sound Current (12-1), 15, Star Shadow (12-1), 16, Sound Current (12-1), 17, Star Shadow (12-1), 18, Sound Current (12-1), 19, Star Shadow (12-1), 20, Sound Current (12-1), 21, Star Shadow (12-1), 22, Sound Current (12-1), 23, Star Shadow (12-1), 24, Sound Current (12-1), 25, Star Shadow (12-1), 26, Sound Current (12-1), 27, Star Shadow (12-1), 28, Sound Current (12-1), 29, Star Shadow (12-1), 30, Sound Current (12-1), 31, Star Shadow (12-1), 32, Sound Current (12-1), 33, Star Shadow (12-1), 34, Sound Current (12-1), 35, Star Shadow (12-1), 36, Sound Current (12-1), 37, Star Shadow (12-1), 38, Sound Current (12-1), 39, Star Shadow (12-1), 40, Sound Current (12-1), 41, Star Shadow (12-1), 42, Sound Current (12-1), 43, Star Shadow (12-1), 44, Sound Current (12-1), 45, Star Shadow (12-1), 46, Sound Current (12-1), 47, Star Shadow (12-1), 48, Sound Current (12-1), 49, Star Shadow (12-1), 50, Sound Current (12-1), 51, Star Shadow (12-1), 52, Sound Current (12-1), 53, Star Shadow (12-1), 54, Sound Current (12-1), 55, Star Shadow (12-1), 56, Sound Current (12-1), 57, Star Shadow (12-1), 58, Sound Current (12-1), 59, Star Shadow (12-1), 60, Sound Current (12-1), 61, Star Shadow (12-1), 62, Sound Current (12-1), 63, Star Shadow (12-1), 64, Sound Current (12-1), 65, Star Shadow (12-1), 66, Sound Current (12-1), 67, Star Shadow (12-1), 68, Sound Current (12-1), 69, Star Shadow (12-1), 70, Sound Current (12-1), 71, Star Shadow (12-1), 72, Sound Current (12-1), 73, Star Shadow (12-1), 74, Sound Current (12-1), 75, Star Shadow (12-1), 76, Sound Current (12-1), 77, Star Shadow (12-1), 78, Sound Current (12-1), 79, Star Shadow (12-1), 80, Sound Current (12-1), 81, Star Shadow (12-1), 82, Sound Current (12-1), 83, Star Shadow (12-1), 84, Sound Current (12-1), 85, Star Shadow (12-1), 86, Sound Current (12-1), 87, Star Shadow (12-1), 88, Sound Current (12-1), 89, Star Shadow (12-1), 90, Sound Current (12-1), 91, Star Shadow (12-1), 92, Sound Current (12-1), 93, Star Shadow (12-1), 94, Sound Current (12-1), 95, Star Shadow (12-1), 96, Sound Current (12-1), 97, Star Shadow (12-1), 98, Sound Current (12-1), 99, Star Shadow (12-1), 100, Sound Current (12-1), 101, Star Shadow (12-1), 102, Sound Current (12-1), 103, Star Shadow (12-1), 104, Sound Current (12-1), 105, Star Shadow (12-1), 106, Sound Current (12-1), 107, Star Shadow (12-1), 108, Sound Current (12-1), 109, Star Shadow (12-1), 110, Sound Current (12-1), 111, Star Shadow (12-1), 112, Sound Current (12-1), 113, Star Shadow (12-1), 114, Sound Current (12-1), 115, Star Shadow (12-1), 116, Sound Current (12-1), 117, Star Shadow (12-1), 118, Sound Current (12-1), 119, Star 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Current (12-1), 235, Star Shadow (12-1), 236, Sound Current (12-1), 237, Star Shadow (12-1), 238, Sound Current (12-1), 239, Star Shadow (12-1), 240, Sound Current (12-1), 241, Star Shadow (12-1), 242, Sound Current (12-1), 243, Star Shadow (12-1), 244, Sound Current (12-1), 245, Star Shadow (12-1), 246, Sound Current (12-1), 247, Star Shadow (12-1), 248, Sound Current (12-1), 249, Star Shadow (12-1), 250, Sound Current (12-1), 251, Star Shadow (12-1), 252, Sound Current (12-1), 253, Star Shadow (12-1), 254, Sound Current (12-1), 255, Star Shadow (12-1), 256, Sound Current (12-1), 257, Star Shadow (12-1), 258, Sound Current (12-1), 259, Star Shadow (12-1), 260, Sound Current (12-1), 261, Star Shadow (12-1), 262, Sound Current (12-1), 263, Star Shadow (12-1), 264, Sound Current (12-1), 265, Star Shadow (12-1), 266, Sound Current (12-1), 267, Star Shadow (12-1), 268, Sound Current (12-1), 269, Star Shadow (12-1), 270, Sound Current (12-1), 271, Star Shadow (12-1), 272, Sound Current 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Star Shadow (12-1), 312, Sound Current (12-1), 313, Star Shadow (12-1), 314, Sound Current (12-1), 315, Star Shadow (12-1), 316, Sound Current (12-1), 317, Star Shadow (12-1), 318, Sound Current (12-1), 319, Star Shadow (12-1), 320, Sound Current (12-1), 321, Star Shadow (12-1), 322, Sound Current (12-1), 323, Star Shadow (12-1), 324, Sound Current (12-1), 325, Star Shadow (12-1), 326, Sound Current (12-1), 327, Star Shadow (12-1), 328, Sound Current (12-1), 329, Star Shadow (12-1), 330, Sound Current (12-1), 331, Star Shadow (12-1), 332, Sound Current (12-1), 333, Star Shadow (12-1), 334, Sound Current (12-1), 335, Star Shadow (12-1), 336, Sound Current (12-1), 337, Star Shadow (12



Abject collapse fails to dent gritty resolve of captain under siege

# Bold Atherton looks only ahead



DAVID MILLER  
At Queen's Park Oval

Denied an England victory that even West Indies had thought likely, Mike Atherton showed himself, in the aftermath of a cataclysmic defeat, to be a captain of rare equanimity and unshakable resolve.

Having just experienced cricket's equivalent of the rout of the Light Brigade, he was yesterday measured in his outlook and defiant in spirit. He and his team might have been crushed by Curtly Ambrose in an historic collapse of 46 all out, but that element of moral fibre which made his appointment last year so welcome, remained unimpaired.

"I am perfectly happy with my form as a player, and with my performance as captain," Atherton said. "As for this," — and you sensed that Tuesday's capitulation was already put behind him — "I'm strong enough to come through."

Atherton was regretful, of course, and no doubt inwardly had suffered profoundly from the disappointment. Some captains would have been emotionally struck down by this experience, but his strength of character, an uncommon quality in too much of contemporary British sport, still shone.

An intimidating defeat, it was suggested to him. Yes, he said, almost belligerently, as Churchill did in election defeat, it was a low score! England had been blown away. A couple of missed catches [Hick] had not helped, but you could never expect such a crash. There were a couple of loose shots [Smith and Hick], a damaging run-out [Rampersad], but Ambrose had to be given credit for inflicting the worst experience he, Atherton, had known.

The bookmakers' odds on a 5-0 whitewash were irrelevant, he said dismissively, and there were a lot of positive aspects. "If we can do for five days what we did here for three, we'll be close," he said. "I felt we were favourites to win, but hadn't thought it would be easy, and in that mood Ambrose is a fearsome prospect."

The last month of the tour would be very hard work. Atherton admitted, yet Cadick's six for 65, for example, was a breakthrough for him in Test cricket. He vigorously denied that England lost because they believed they were going to. There was no such mood in the dressing-room, he asserted.

Asked provocatively whether the collapse had come because of a freak bowling spell or an endemic English

malaise, Atherton rejected this latter idea, saying the conditions were ideal for Ambrose, who had bowled superbly, but he agreed that England's problems were part temperamental, part technical.

"Nobody can criticise our preparation [last autumn]," he stressed. He had his feelings about disadvantageous aspects of county cricket upon Test players, but the selections had been made with regard to character and temperament. It was important now to pick up, there was no benefit to be had from dwelling on yesterday.

Here, in fact, we saw a leader dealing with reality rather than theory; dealing with the material available. The development of better players is another matter. Atherton has to lead a team on to the field in Barbados in eight days' time. That, as it should be, is his priority.

He acknowledged the cost of Hick's dropped catches and the folly of Rampersad. "At none for one in the first over, the situation requires clinical temperament and judgment," Atherton said. "[It] was an aberration when the pressure was intense. No one doubts he's highly talented, but he has to come to terms with temperament [for the occasion]. I believe he can, but this can take time. We have to show patience and belief in players." Here was a 26-year-old captain talking like a veteran Test professional.

Should he have brought older players? "I knew there'd be a tough time, and I considered whether I'd regret not bringing one experienced player, but I don't believe that would have made any difference. You hope that if a young player's on the line, between his spirit being broken and moving forward, he'll go the right way."

That the margin was small, even in such a catastrophe for England, was acknowledged by Richie Richardson, the West Indies captain. "They were demoralised when a couple of chances went down," Richardson said. "If we had had to come back this morning [for the start of England's second innings if Tuesday's rain had continued], it might have been different, but we were fired up for those 15 overs yesterday evening."

In the light of the attitude of the England captain, the fourth Test in Barbados, the citadel of West Indies cricket, may yet be worth watching for the hordes of English spectators scheduled to descend on the island this week.



Atherton, the England captain, stands tall yesterday despite his side's sensational loss to West Indies

## FULL SCOREBOARD FROM PORT OF SPAIN

West Indies won toss	
WEST INDIES: First Innings	
D L Hayes b Salimullah	38
R B Richardson b Salimullah	39
B C Lara b Lewis	43
K L T Thurnton b Lewis	1
J C Adams c Smith b Lewis	2
S Chandrapaul b Fraser	19
T J R Murray not out	27
W K M Benjamin b Fraser	13
C E L Ambrose c Thorpe b Fraser	13
C A Walsh b Lewis	9
K C G Benjamin b Fraser	9
Extras (b 1, lb 13, w 1, nb 12)	27
Total	268
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-99, 2-158, 3-158, 4-183, 5-194, 6-201, 7-212, 8-241, 9-251	
BOWLING: Fraser 24-4-49-4, Cadick 19-6-43-0, Lewis 25-3-61-4, Salimullah 22-4-72-2, Rampersad 21-4-0, Hick 3-1-5-0	
ENGLAND: First Innings	
M A Atherton c Murray	48
W K M Benjamin	48
WEST INDIES: Second Innings	
D L Hayes b Lewis	19
R B Richardson c and b Cadick	3
ENGLAND: Second Innings	
M A Atherton b Ambrose	0
A J Stewart b Ambrose	18
M R Rampersad run out	1
A J Smith b Ambrose	1
G A Hick c Murray b Ambrose	6
G P Thorpe b Ambrose	3
D K Salimullah c Lara b Walsh	0
WEST INDIES: First Innings	
M R Rampersad c and b	12
W K M Benjamin	23
R A Smith b Ambrose	12
G A Hick b Walsh	40
G P Thorpe c Lara b Ambrose	86
R C Russell b Ambrose	23
C C Lewis b Ambrose	9
D K Salimullah c Lara b Walsh	36
A R Cadick c Lara b W K M Benjamin	6
A R C Fraser not out	8
Extras (b 10, lb 9, w 1, nb 11)	31
Total	328
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-16, 2-92, 3-97, 4-115, 5-167, 6-249, 7-273, 8-281, 9-294	
BOWLING: Ambrose 29-6-60-5, Walsh 27-3-77-2 (nb 3), K C G Benjamin 20-5-70-0 (nb 1), W K M Benjamin 22-3-61-5 (nb 2), Adams 4-0-10-0, Chandrapaul 5-0-13-0 (nb 3), Thurnton 3-0-5-0	
ENGLAND: Second Innings	
M A Atherton b Ambrose	0
A J Stewart b Ambrose	18
M R Rampersad run out	1
A J Smith b Ambrose	1
G A Hick c Murray b Ambrose	6
G P Thorpe b Ambrose	3
D K Salimullah c Lara b Walsh	0

## Heightened expectations put Ambrose above the rest

Alan Lee, cricket correspondent,  
on the Antiguan fast bowler who  
tormented England in the third Test



It seems absurd now, yet it is only a matter of weeks ago that serious doubts were being voiced about Curtly Ambrose. He was thought to be physically weary and mentally dispirited. Retirement was openly being mooted and Ambrose neither said nor did anything to dispel the idea.

His bowling wore the cloak of fatigue and familiarity and he was apparently tired of the rigours of international cricket. In Georgetown, however, he appeared revived and then, here in Trinidad, he bowled the greatest spell of his life.

The testimony is not mine, but that of Richie Richardson, the West Indies captain. Reflecting on the extraordinary events of the third Test, Richardson said: "I have seen him bowl similar spells twice before but I believe this is the best. When he took seven for one against Australia [last year], the Perth wicket had a lot of bounce, which suited him. In Bridgetown, when he bowled out South Africa [in 1992], it kept low. Here, it was totally his determination that demoralised England."

The six wickets taken by Ambrose on Tuesday evening decided a Test match, and a series, in the most spectacular fashion. They also removed any doubts about his right to be mentioned in the same breath as Andy Roberts, Michael Holding, Joel Garner and Malcolm Marshall. Perhaps they even put him ahead of them.

Doubts had been expressed, not least by Holding. Yesterday, however, Holding was willing to concede a change of heart. Ambrose, he now believes, not only merits a place in the hall of fame of West Indian fast bowlers but is probably the best of them all.

This can forever be debated, for the five of them boast different assets. Marshall, a skidding bowler with control of swing and seam, played the most Tests and took the most wickets at the lowest average. But Garner, with his steeping bounce and unforgiving accuracy, Roberts, with his explosive speed, and Holding, streamlined and silky skilled, have their devotees.

What is different about Ambrose, what makes him greater than these predecessors, is that he has spent most of his career isolated in the expectations of public and players. While the other four worked, for a memorably

intimidating period, as a unit from which there was never a bolt-hole, Ambrose has had to lead an inferior attack. Any one of four used to win matches for West Indies now, invariably, it is Ambrose.

In character, as well as in size and style of bowling, he can best be compared to Garner. There is a predatory edge to his bowling, the ball brought down from a towering height, and, like Garner, he seldom allows batsmen the luxury of playing forward or the comfort of any width. Like Garner, too, he is an introvert. Ambrose, born to a modest Antiguan family, is a private man, self-conscious to the point of silence among strangers. He came to the game late, playing no first-class cricket until he was 22, and eight years and 46 Tests later he remains a mysterious, brooding figure to those outside his small circle of team-mates and friends.

He will come to England this summer for a fifth season of county cricket with Northamptonshire but, at the end of it, his contract expires and he may not be back. "I haven't made up my mind about next year in terms of county cricket," he said. "I want to wait and see how I feel after this season."

Despite the £50,000 he won here through a sponsorship incentive, Ambrose is not a materialistic cricketer. "I believe strongly in God," he said, "and he gives me the strength and support to carry on when I feel tired."

Ominously for England, and all other opposition, he suddenly does not feel quite so tired. He is talking, indeed, of going on from his present total of 214 Test wickets in search of 300 and beyond. By the time he is finished, there may be no disputing that he is the greatest of them all.



Ambrose: predatory

## Warne highlights South Africa's shortcoming

FROM JOHN WOODCOCK  
IN DURBAN

AMONG the young people of South Africa the enthusiasm for sport, most of all for cricket, is such that only an unstable social and political future can stop them producing, within a few years, many champions. Not even in the Caribbean, before basketball became the rage there, have I seen anything on a cricket ground to compare with the scenes at Kingsmead after the third Test match had ended here on Tuesday.

Those who were not playing cricket on the outfield or behind the stands were mobbing Shane Warne as though

he were a Beetle. As the match itself was petering out there had been queues of autograph hunters 100 yards long and four deep. There is discipline and determination, spontaneity and sunshine, and if the whole country ever does pull together nothing in sport should be beyond it.

At the moment, South Africa's cricket team is short of flair. Hansie Cronje and Jonty Rhodes have it, but there is nobody with the genius of Barry Richards or Graeme Pollock. Something less rich than Kepler Wessels' captaincy will be needed soon; but he has raised a side that tries 110 per cent and is refreshingly uncynical.

At the end of the Ashes series in England last summer, it could be argued that the only Englishman good enough to be included in a combined Anglo-Australian side would have been Graham Gooch. A corresponding XI chosen today, with the form shown in the series just finished as the sole criterion, might read Hudson, Slater, Cronje, Mark Waugh, Rhodes, Steve Waugh, Healy, Matthews, Warne, de Villiers and Donald. There are six South Africans and only five Australians in that lot — and, to keep the game moving and make sure that it is played in the best spirit, Rhodes would be captain.

If there were such a thing as a ranking list among Test-playing countries, it would be difficult to separate Australia, South Africa and Pakistan. They would be behind West Indies and ahead of England, though India, with home advantage, have again become very difficult to beat. So far as facilities are concerned, South Africa lead the field.

They kept building new grounds and refurbishing old ones during their long isolation. So, should the World Cup come here in 2002, there would be at least eight centres capable of accommodating, in fine style, any of the matches. Newlands, sadly, has lost its leafy charm: at Kingsmead

too, where once flamboyant trees cast their shade across grassy banks, now all is concrete. But they are still splendid grounds.

Unfortunately, the pitches are less satisfactory, being slow enough to make for negative cricket, sometimes even to reward it. This, though, is a universal problem. There are not half a dozen grounds in the world where one can confidently expect to find a pitch with much pace in it. Perth, the Oval, Bridgetown, Madras — they come to mind, but the last three are almost equally likely to be lifeless. One can but hope that this will change, and that by his supreme skill and modish

appearance Warne may have helped to deliver South Africa from the grip of the long-running bowler.

It must have seemed incongruous to many following the matches from afar that Test cricket could even have been contemplated in South Africa these past few weeks. Let alone played with a clear conscience. But it has been. At no time has the strife and sadness impinged upon the tour. They might have been happening in another country. "Our guys have really enjoyed themselves," Allan Border said. God willing, England's cricketers will do the same in two years' time. But there is much darkness to be negotiated first.

## New Zealand fail to cope with Kumble

ANIL Kumble, the leg spinner, bowled India to a 12-run victory in the third one-day international in Wellington yesterday. On a pitch that produced nearly 500 runs, Kumble took five for 33.

India's total of 255 was built on a free-scoring opening partnership between Sachin Tendulkar and Ajay Jadeja, who put on 105 at a rate of five an over. Navjot Sidhu, with an unbeaten 71, ensured that their good work was not wasted.

New Zealand started their pursuit badly when Bryan Young was bowled by Srinath for two in the fourth over.

Chris Harris and Blair Hartland added 60 together but the home side sank to 76 for four after Kumble dislodged both batsmen and Fleming was run out for two.

Shane Thomson and Adam Parore put on 85 for the sixth wicket and lifted the scoring rate to set up hopes of a New Zealand victory, but Kumble struck again, having Thomson stumped by Nayan Mongia and bowling Parore. New Zealand have a chance to square the series in the fourth and final match in Christchurch on Saturday.

Scoreboard, page 45

## WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 45

### DECOLLATION

(a) The action of chopping off the head of someone else, beheading, decapitating, from the Latin *de* "off" + *collum* "the neck". And finally, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished old girls, and girls, I cannot let you go tonight without a special mention of the Assistant Head. We all know how much she has contributed to the school over the years. And I know you will agree with me that, for everything she has done, for being what she is, she deserves a thorough and hearty decollation.

### EPICENE

(a) Androgynous, hermaphrodite, having both male and female characteristics, derived from the Ancient Greek for "in common". A secondary meaning which now seems to be taking over from the primary meaning is *weak, feeble, or effeminate*. "A prey to the eagles of the epicene gender, both Hies and Shes."

### TERGIVERSATE

(b) To do a U-turn, to desert one's party, to turn renegade, from the Latin *tergum* "the back" + *versare* "to turn". "Tergiversation is useless, for what side of himself does a man show in tergiversating?"

### UXORILLOCAL

(c) Living with one's wife's family. From the Latin *uxor* "a wife, spouse or partner" + *locus* "a place". A suitable wish for a bride: "May your husband be ever uxorious and never uxoricidal." For a suitable curse, transpose the adjectives.

## SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1 Rh5+ Bxh8 2 Rxb8+ Kxb8 3 Nxf7+ forking Black's king and queen.

## Torrance journey ends with bogey

FROM JOHN HOPKINS  
GOLF CORRESPONDENT  
IN NEW ORLEANS

SAM Torrance is a martyr to ill health. Sam, Sam the suffering man. It is not that he is sometimes ill. It is that he is rarely well. Torrance's ailments these past few years would fill an issue of *The Lancet*. You name it, he's had it. He might even have it.

With him, it's not common or garden illnesses like flu. Torrance goes for the exotic. Other people have conjunctivitis in one eye; Torrance has cysts in both. Other people sleepwalk and stub a toe; Torrance crashed into a stone flowerpot and bruised his sternum. Torrance has verrucae where others get corns. When he moves house he doesn't strain his back, he breaks his ribs.

Torrance arrived here to compete in a tournament before the Masters next week with a good news/bad news story that was pure Torrance.

The good news was his verrucae were better and the bad news was he had raging toothache. From foot to mouth, you might say.

Torrance had just made the sort of journey that would be distressing to Philias Fogg — 42 hours and 14 hours' time difference. After coming sixth in the Indonesian Open, he left Jakarta on Sunday evening and reached London at 6.15 on Monday morning. That afternoon he flew to Chicago and on to New Orleans. It was not possible for the man for whom the phrase accident-prone seems inadequate to travel halfway round the world without incident. Sure enough, his golf clubs did not arrive with him. They were in Chicago.

Three centuries ago English troops sailed up the Mississippi intent on attacking the French, only to turn back convinced the French were lying in wait around a bend. The English Turn golf

course, where the Freeport McMoran is being played, is named after that dubious nautical achievement. It is here that Torrance, Nick Faldo, Barry Lane, José María Olazábal and Sandy Lyle are preparing for the Masters. Ian Woosnam, who won this event in 1991 and followed it a week later with victory at Augusta, has decided to forgo the tournament this year. Colin Montgomerie, Seve

Ballesteros and Bernhard Langer, who all competed in the Players' Championship last week, are others missing. "I like competing," Faldo said. "Augusta you see every year. You know what you've got to do. The holes don't vary much from year to year. It's not like a links — one day it's a wedge, the next a three-iron. I like to be competitive. For me, it is far better than standing there going bang, bang, one practice shot after another."

Faldo finished fifth, 13 strokes behind Greg Norman, in the Players' Championship. "I am happy with my preparation this year," Faldo said. "The five days I spent with Lead [David Leadbetter, his coach] at the end of February are beginning to pay off."

And Torrance? He had a smile on his face after returning from the dentist. "It was a problem with my bite," he said, no longer speaking through clenched teeth. "The dentist sorted it out."



Torrance: rarely well

## SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm)	Conditions	Runs to resort	Weather (°F)	Last snow
ANDORRA					
Soldeu	50	145 fair spring Excellent spring conditions off piste	slush	fine	4 26/3
AUSTRIA					
Obergurgl	20	100 good varied Upper runs best in early morning sunshine	slush	fine	15 28/3
Schladming	0	80 fair varied Very warm temperatures on Grand Gln	closed	fine	16 27/8
St Anton	15	320 good spring Superb spring snow for early risers	slush	fine	8 26/3
FRANCE					
Avoriaz	130	170 soft heavy Some great spring skiing possible in morning	slush	sun	11 28/3
Flaine	30	225 good Great morning skiing in Flaine bowl	slush	sun	5 26/3
Isola	30	90 fair soft spring	slush	sun	8 1/3
Tignes	105	225 good soft slush	slush	sun	0 26/3
Val Thorens	60	200 good varied Excellent skiing on Grande Motte glacier	slush	fine	14 26/3
ITALY					
Cervinia	30	255 fair open Some bare patches on south facing slopes	slush	fair	0 17/3
SWITZERLAND					
Arros	70	80 good spring Wonderful spring snow off piste before midday	slush	fine	11 28/3
C Montana	10	110 fair varied	slush	fine	12 26/3
Mürren	20	150 fair heavy	slush	fine	15 26/3
Wengen	0	60 warm Superb spring snow to enjoy in morning	slush	fine	13 26/3

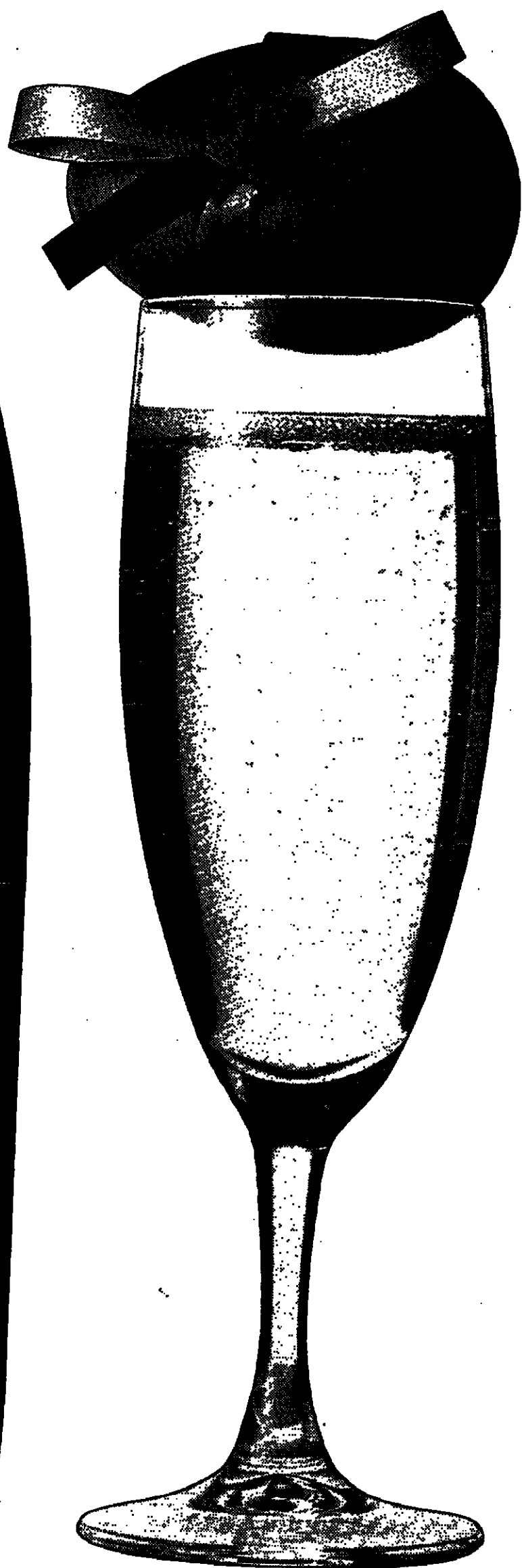
Source: Ski Club of Great Britain. L - lower slopes; U - upper; art - artificial





WINES FROM

SPAIN

EGG  
ON  
TOAST

Freixenet

MAKES ANY OCCASION







